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WEDNESDAY MAY 7 1997

Independence for Bank of England

Brown raises interest rates then yields control of them

By JILL SHERMAN
AND ALASDAIR MURRAY

GORDON BROWN surrendered the power to set interest rates to the Bank of England yesterday in a surprise move designed to prove Labour's determination to control inflation.

The Chancellor announced one of the biggest changes in economic policy-making this century moments after raising the base rate a quarter point to 6.25 per cent.

It was to be his first and last interest rate announcement, he said, as he explained that future decisions were to be taken out of politicians' hands to prevent them seeking short-term popularity with the voters.

The decision delighted the City, sending both the pound and the stock market to new highs. The FT-SE 100 index cleared 4,500 for the first time, closing up 53.7 at 4,519.3, and the pound touched a post-ERM record, rising more than 2½ pence to DM2.8202.

Traders were surprised at the speed and scale of the reforms, but they said they boded well for Mr Brown's reputation and were "some way to achieving his stated aim of being an iron chancellor". The interest rate rise was also widely applauded in the City, which has become increasingly concerned about the speed of economic growth.

Explaining his decision yesterday, Mr Brown said that the higher rate was necessary to stop inflation overshooting the Government's 2.5 per cent target next year. Economic forecasts had shown that there was a threat from increased consumer spending, surging house prices, higher earnings and the growing money supply. Aides suggested that Treasury figures showed that inflation could be nearer 4 per cent by the end of next year.



Gordon Brown yesterday: "time for tough decisions"

But the main focus of yesterday's announcement was the decision to give the Bank of England effective independence. Although Mr Brown and Tony Blair had been working on the idea for some time, they had never suggested that it would happen in the first week of government.

From next month, Eddie George, the Governor of the Bank of England, and a nine-member committee will determine interest rates to meet an inflation target set by the Government.

The new monetary policy committee will include four people appointed by the Chancellor, one of whom will be a second deputy governor to join Howard Davies, the existing deputy governor. Gavyn Davies, chief international economist at Goldman Sachs, is the favourite for the post. Two more members with three-year contracts will be appointed.

Mr Brown told his Treasury press conference: "This is the time to take the tough decisions we need for the long-term interests and the prosperity of the country. We will not shrink from the tough decisions needed to deliver stability for long-term growth. I have therefore decided to give the Bank of England

operational responsibility for setting interest rates, with immediate effect."

Although the changes take place immediately, they will be backed by a short Bill next month. The Chancellor will have powers to override the Bank in exceptional circumstances — for example if war breaks out — but in most cases, including a run on the pound, Mr George and his committee would take full responsibility for any emergency changes in interest rates.

Mr Brown vigorously denied that the move marked the first step to signing up to a single European currency, saying the reform was "a British solution to suit British domestic needs". It was still highly unlikely that the Government would adopt the euro in 1999, and further legislation would be needed to meet the blueprint for independent central banks outlined in the Maastricht criteria.

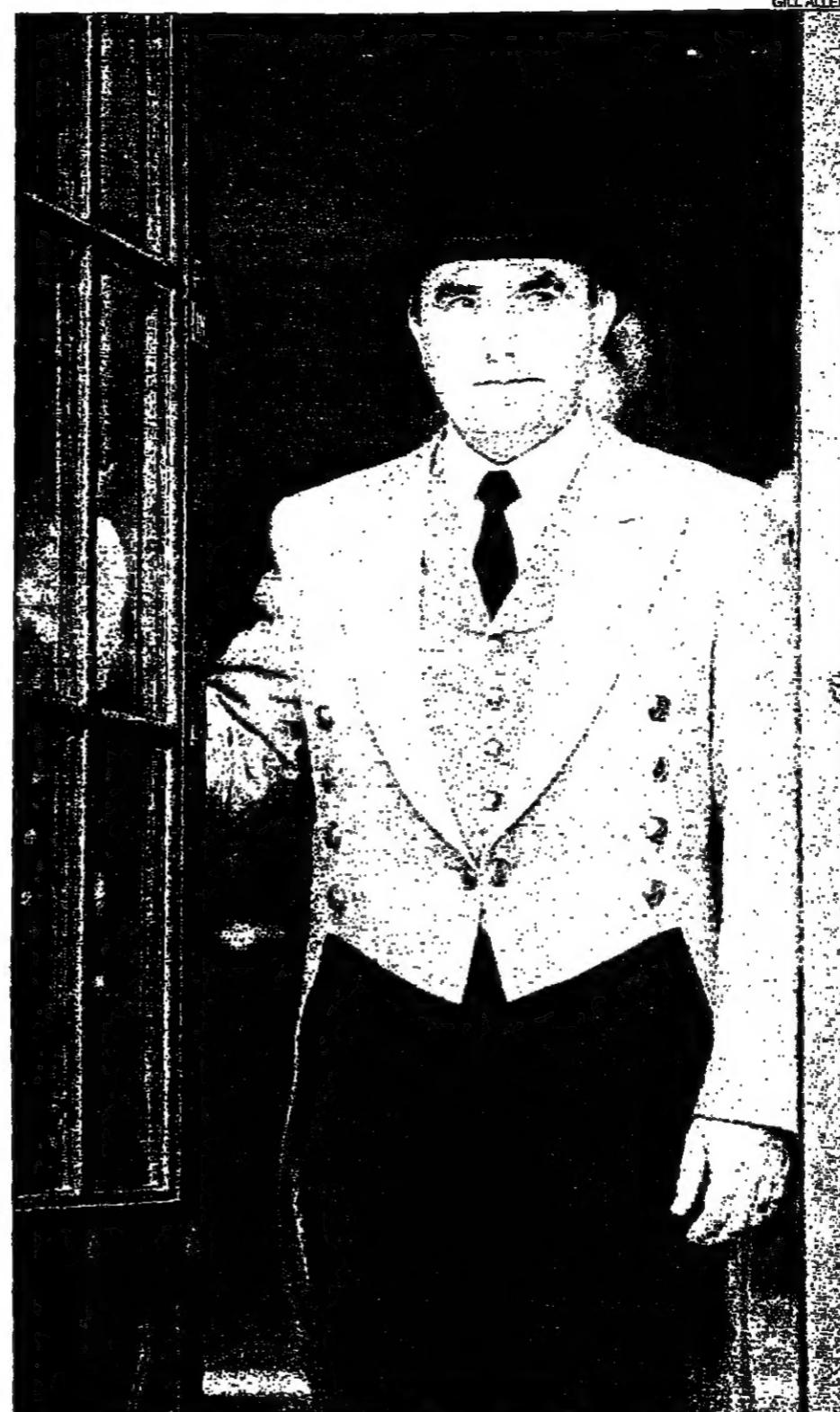
Under those terms the Bank would have to have the power to set inflation targets which at the moment remains in the Chancellor's hands.

While the move was welcomed in the City, it was immediately attacked by Mr Brown's predecessor, Kenneth Clarke, who was constantly at odds with Mr George over whether rates needed to rise. He said they would now almost certainly go up.

"I wouldn't have made this interest rate rise for a start because nothing economically has changed since I last decided not to," Mr Clarke told BBC Radio 5 Live. Mr Brown had rushed to hand over responsi-

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Opening the door to independence at the Bank of England yesterday

Lesson taught by Labour Down Under

By OLIVER AUGUST

LABOUR'S plan for the Bank of England was modelled on the reform of the New Zealand Reserve Bank which turned a chronically inflation-prone economy into one of the best managed in the world.

The central bank was granted independence by New Zealand's Labour Government in 1989 and Don Brash, the governor, was put on performance-related pay. His task is to keep inflation under 3 per cent to maintain his salary. If prices shoot up he could even lose his job.

Inflation was at 14 per cent when the reform was proposed and has stayed within the target range of zero to 2 per cent for most of the 1990s. Interest rates have been reduced.

As part of economic reforms that influenced the thinking of Tony Blair and his colleagues, Mr Brash was given a contract which sets targets for inflation and price stability.

Interest rates and other monetary matters are set by the central bank without interference but outside advisers from industry, finance and universities are consulted.

The sovereignty of parliament is preserved and the Government has the right to override the price stability objectives in an emergency. The independent Federal Reserve in America and the Bundesbank in Germany operate in federations with states having representatives on their boards. In 1989, George Blunden, then deputy governor of the Bank of England, said central bankers look at Mr Brash "not only with envy but also with awe".

Hague-Howard pact collapses

By PHILIP WEBSTER AND
ANDREW PIERCE

WILLIAM HAGUE will enter the race for the Tory leadership today after pulling out of a pact with Michael Howard under which he would have run as the former Home Secretary's deputy.

The former Welsh Secretary will announce his challenge after abandoning a deal in which he would have campaigned with Mr Howard on a "dream ticket". His move provoked acrimony at the top of the party only four days after John Major stood down.

The two men were reportedly by Mr Howard's friends to have sealed an agreement over a glass of champagne late on Monday night. Arrangements had even been made for them to appear together at a press conference yesterday, it was said.

Mr Hague's supporters saw it differently. They said that Mr Howard had misunderstood Mr Hague's position

and that the decision had never been final. Mr Hague, they said, had left scope for further discussion the next morning, when he did indeed tell Mr Howard that he was going to make his own challenge. It was clear last night, however, that Mr Hague regretted what had happened.

The former Home Secretary, who had hoped to have Mr Hague by his side, went ahead with his own leadership campaign launch at which he was backed by several senior MPs and former ministers.

While trying to concentrate on his pitch for the Tory top job, repeatedly promising that he would "lead from the front", Mr Howard said that he and Mr Hague had agreed a joint bid. "An agreement was reached with Mr Hague. He had second thoughts. He was perfectly entitled to have second thoughts," he said.

The dispute delighted the camps of two other rightwing candidates, John Redwood, who also made his pitch for

ministers, including Francis Maude, David Maclean and David Davis, with him yesterday and his camp voiced confidence about the contest.

Mr Howard said the party must listen to the electorate. "We must make the changes required to modernise the party's campaigning, presentation and publicity." He put himself forward as the man who could again do battle with "his old sparring partner".

Mr Redwood said his two years on the back benches after his last challenge gave him the advantage because he would not have to defend old policies. "The others will have to explain how they stayed there defending those policies to the bitter end," he said and he insisted that he wanted to keep the Conservative Party as a "broad church".

He added: "The problem is that we don't have enough worshippers at the moment. We have to find a lot more and we won't do that by only having one issue and one theme."

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At odds: William Hague, left, and Michael Howard

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Drunk driver facing execution over women's death

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

FOR the first time in America a man may be executed for drunk driving.

Thomas Jones, 39, has been convicted of first degree murder over the death of a 19-year-old woman student, who died when his car ploughed into theirs last year while he was high on painkillers and beer.

A jury in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, was yesterday deciding if he

should be sentenced to death. The case, the clearest illustration yet of America's growing intolerance of drunk driving, is being watched closely throughout the country.

Similar cases are pending in other parts of North Carolina and Kentucky. "People who drive drunk and recklessly can kill people just as much as they can kill them with a gun or a knife," Vincent Rabil, the assistant district attorney, said.

Jones had been taking various painkillers for more than 16 years since he lost part of his left leg in a lawn-mower accident. Arrested on three other occasions, he has been convicted twice on charges of driving while unfit to do so. In the third case, still pending, he almost hit a deputy sheriff's car after taking pills with beer chasers.

Jones apologised in court to the students' parents and said he was "sorry somebody had to die". The two

families do not want him to suffer the death penalty but hope instead that he will be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole.

Defence lawyers, capital punishment experts and law professors have all denounced the pursuit of the death penalty in such cases. They said the draconian sentence would open the way to capital prosecutions for crimes traditionally not seen as severe enough to warrant execution.

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Brown will have to stick to his guns after flying start

NOTHING that Gordon Brown is likely to do as Chancellor will have as much lasting importance as his decision to make the Bank of England operationally responsible for setting interest rates.

At a stroke, Mr Brown has removed one of past Labour governments' main areas of vulnerability, the doubts of City markets about their commitment to low inflation. However, as Eddie George, the Bank Governor, noted, monetary and fiscal policy have to be compatible, so Mr Brown will have to deliver on his pledge to be tough on spending and borrowing.

Tony Blair was only partly exaggerating when he claimed it was

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

"the biggest decision in economic policy making since the War". It certainly puts into perspective the Lilliputian manoeuvrings of the Tory leadership contenders.

In a delightful irony, the decision was criticised by Kenneth Clarke for being likely to produce "tighter monetary policy" than otherwise and was praised by Norman Lamont for promising "sound money". Labour governments have often been criticised by the Left for ending up — usually after financial crises — as the bankers' friends. But the Blair Government has started

from this position and given itself greater freedom to manoeuvre.

It was very much Mr Brown's initiative, nurtured over the past two years, and builds on Mr Clarke's decision to make monetary policy more open. Labour's statement in opposition had been ambiguous on timing, partly, it now looks, to avoid pre-election criticism. Mr Brown was persuaded of the need to act now by the pre-election differences between Mr Clarke and the Bank and by discussions in Washington. Mr Blair accepted the case a couple of months ago, while

the two other members of the "big four" (John Prescott and Robin Cook) agreed on Sunday evening.

The rest of the Cabinet was consulted yesterday morning, though this hardly gave time for anyone to object.

The decision has enormous constitutional implications. The traditional objection has been that giving the Bank responsibility for interest rates undermines accountability to Parliament. As Mr Clarke said yesterday: "It won't be good enough for him to turn round and say, 'It's not my responsibility any more, guy. I've handed over control to this committee. You must go and complain to them if they get it wrong.'

Mr Brown's response is that the Bank will operate within economic objectives and, in particular, an inflation target that is set by the Government.

The new monetary policy committee will be largely nominated by the Chancellor, though to be credible its members will have, in Mr Brown's phrase, to be "recognised experts". The discussions, and any votes, will be made public. The Bank will also report on an enhanced basis to the Treasury Select Committee, which recommended similar arrangements to those that are now being adopted.

The only bigger decision that Mr Brown might make is to recom-

mend entry into a single currency, though he repeated that it was "highly unlikely" that Britain would join in a first wave in 1999. Yesterday's decision leaves open either option. It removes control of interest rates from politicians, though further legislation would be required on the Bank's status before entry into monetary union. Operational independence for the Bank will, however, reassure the markets, which might have become unsettled ahead of a decision on monetary union.

Mr Brown has got off to a flying start as Chancellor.

PETER RIDDELL

ADRIAN SHERATT

Reform drafted on the last lap of election victory

BY JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE letter to Eddie George outlining Gordon Brown's plans to give the Bank of England independence over interest rates was drafted in a London hotel on a laptop computer 36 hours before Labour won the election.

Gordon Brown and Ed Balls, his economic adviser, put the final touches to the proposals on Mr Balls' computer last Wednesday as the polls suggested that Labour was heading for a landslide victory.

The idea had been conceived two years earlier when Mr Balls, then aged 28, presented a paper to Tony Blair and Mr Brown suggesting the Bank should set interest rates.

On Friday, Mr Brown moved swiftly. Within hours of celebrating Labour's win at the Festival Hall and being appointed Chancellor, Mr Brown went to the Treasury. He told Terry Burns, the Permanent Secretary, of his plans and showed him the draft letter to the Governor.

That announced bluntly: "The Government intends to give the Bank of England operational responsibility for setting interest rates. The Government plans to provide in the Queen's Speech for legislation to amend the Bank of England Act 1946."

Mr Burns' officials worked overnight and through the weekend to get the necessary paperwork together to announce the most sweeping reform of the Bank of England for 300 years. Mr Brown and his advisers spent the weekend combing the Treasury books, to assess the real state of the nation's finances.

By Sunday the Chancellor realised that "corrective action" had to be taken immed-

iately to stop inflation breaching the Government's target of 2.5 per cent. Government sources said yesterday that it looked as if inflation was heading for nearly 4 per cent by the end of next year. He decided then that the changes to allow the Bank of England to set interest rates should be announced at once.

On Sunday night, Mr Brown went to see the Prime Minister at his home in Islington. Mr Brown and Mr Blair consulted John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, and Robin Cook, the Foreign Sec-

Early bird

Gordon Brown has established a cracking pace at the Treasury, arriving for work by 7am. Meetings start as early as 7.30am and he met Eddie George yesterday at 8am.

On Monday the Chancellor asked Mr George to a meeting at the Treasury at 9am the following morning. Mr George had no prior knowledge of the impending bombshell. Although Mr Brown and Mr Blair had discussed reforms of the Bank of England on several occasions with Mr George over the last two months, the Governor had no idea of the speed with which the Chancellor would act.

He was told that the planned monthly meeting be-

rely, by telephone and then agreed that the announcement should be made on Tuesday.

On Monday the Chancellor asked Mr George to a meeting at the Treasury at 9am the following morning. Mr George had no prior knowledge of the impending bombshell. Although Mr Brown and Mr Blair had discussed reforms of the Bank of England on several occasions with Mr George over the last two months, the Governor had no idea of the speed with which the Chancellor would act.

He was told that the planned monthly meeting be-

tween the Chancellor and Mr George would take place as usual but be brought forward one day, to Tuesday May 6, to agree any interest rate changes. Mr Brown wanted to be seen as the Iron Chancellor prepared to take tough "corrective" action. From then on the Bank of England would be given the freedom to set interest rates. Mr George was sworn to secrecy.

At 8am yesterday morning the Press Association and other news wires were told only that the meeting with Eddie George had been brought forward. Speculation abounded about an interest rate rise. At the same time other Cabinet members were phoned to be told about the impending announcement and Mr Cook and Mr Prescott saw Mr Blair at Downing Street.

Reporters were then "locked in" at the Treasury until 11am, when Mr Brown declared that interest rates would go up by 0.25 per cent and that he intended to make the Bank of England independent with immediate effect.

The plan had been plotted for over four years. In 1993 Gordon Brown presented a policy document, *A new Economic Approach*, to the party conference which suggested that the Bank of England should be reformed to make it more representative and accountable. In the spring of 1995 Ed Balls drafted his paper for Mr Blair and Mr Brown going one step further and suggesting that the Bank should have operational responsibility for interest rates.

Some critics have expressed concern that the new posts might attract only second-rate economists or political appointees although they are broadly in favour of the shake-up of monetary policy.

Gavyn Davies, chief international economist at Goldman Sachs, is the hot tip for the new position of second deputy. Mr Davies, a former member of the Treasury's Panel of Independent Economic Advisers, refused to comment yesterday on speculation but is a strong supporter of the new set-up. He is



In the driving seat: Eddie George leaving the Treasury after his meeting with the Chancellor yesterday

City waits to give its final verdict on Chancellor's sweeping reforms

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

THE City will give a final verdict on Gordon Brown's sweeping reforms when the names of the members of the new monetary policy committee and the second deputy-general are disclosed in the next few days.

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Gavyn Davies: tipped as the second deputy

respected in the City for his pragmatic approach to the economy.

Mr Davies, 46, has been linked with the Labour Party since he served in the policy unit at No 10 in the dying days of the Callaghan government, while Sue Nye, his wife, is

head of Mr Brown's office. It is expected that he would also be a strong candidate for Governor when Eddie George's contract runs out in a year's time. But Mr Davies will face stiff competition from his namesake Howard Davies, the former head of the CBI, who has three years on his contract as deputy-governor to run.

The monetary policy committee is expected to be staffed with City and academic economists. Bridget Rosewell, director of Business Strategies and another former member of Mr Clarke's panel, would bring strong business and regional expertise having previously worked for the CBI. If

Mr Brown fears that the Bank maintains too hawkish an attitude towards inflation, he could turn to Roger Bootle, head of economics at HSBC, who is the author of a book on the death of inflation. Andrew Sentance, director of the centre for economic forecasting at the London Business School, has also won respect for his pragmatic approach to monetary policy.

But there is concern that Labour will have trouble attracting highly paid City economists — even if City-style salaries are to be paid by the Bank.

Some candidates might also feel the job description too limiting, although Gavyn Davies said yesterday that with the monetary policy committee taking direct responsibility there should be no shortage of takers for the new posts.

Academics may be more attracted to the post as it would leave open the chance of carrying on with non-conflicting work such as theoretical research and lecturing.

Continued from page 1

This was nationalised, the Bank came to the fore in the 19th century, when it gradually assumed the responsibilities of a central bank.

It was recognised as the central note-issuing authority under the Bank Charter Act of 1844, and embraced the roles of lender of last resort and guardian of the nation's gold reserves. "Safe as the Bank of England" swiftly entered the vernacular.

Safe, perhaps, but not immune from strife. One of the Bank's most excruciating moments came in March 1995, when the then deputy governor, Rupert Pennant-Rea, resigned in the wake of kiss-and-tell disclosures by a former mistress.

Bank insiders still refer to

the "Old Lady of Threadneedle Street", and rooms are

known as parlours. In an interview last October, he said: "It might be slightly odd that when you come to a meeting to discuss monetary policy, there is a man with a pink coat who's making sure everybody's there, and tea and

coffee come in silver things."

This was swift to add, in no way implied that the Bank was out of touch with the times. This was the thrust last December, when an all-party committee of MPs laid into the Bank over its handling of the Barings debacle. The MPs attacked its failure to coordinate the regulation of Barings, and said there was a question of "too many cooks". They described the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a "cheerleader for the City", and suggested that it was too close to the institutions it is called on to regulate.

The Bank reshuffled its senior management shortly afterwards, handing responsibility for overall financial structure to Alastair Clark, a lifelong Bank of England employee.

Peter Rodgers, a financial journalist, was brought in to head the press office — a role once reputedly offered to Lawrence of Arabia.

cians who are subject of all kinds of pressures. The credibility of policy will be increased by this move. It is a good day."

The move was also welcomed by the CBI, which said it would enhance the credibility of British monetary policy and lower the cost of finance for industry, and by Stephen Alambritis of the Federation of Small Businesses, who said the Bank was better placed to politicians to gauge business needs.

The City remained con-

cerned, however, about the mini-Budget expected in July and about Mr Brown's ability to meet the spending targets inherited from Mr Clarke.

Mr George said that yesterday's interest rate rise was essential to keep a check on the economy, and he expressed hopes that the new Chancellor would also take a tough line on taxation.

Spain extradites 'supergrass'

A supergrass who says he is owed £1 million in reward money was arrested by Spanish drug investigators working with British Customs against an international cannabis ring. In 1992 Brian Charrington, then a Middlesex car dealer, escaped a £250 million cocaine trafficking charge by Customs after police intervened. Last night plans were underway for his extradition to Britain.

The Prince of Wales received a

rapturous welcome in Belfast

when he flew in for a gala concert, featuring Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, to mark the opening of the Waterfront Hall.

Hundreds of people cheered

and waved Union flags as the Prince went on a walkabout in the loyalist Village area of Belfast.

He visited the Windsor Women's Centre in the Village area, which was firebombed by loyalists last year.

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The 300-year-old lady who has seen it all

By JON ASHWORTH

WITH its pink-coated footmen and marble halls, the Bank of England belongs to another era. Visitors are led through hushed corridors, with the occasional glimpse of the central courtyard where the Governor is inclined to take the air. Electronic screens provide the only tangible link with the fast-paced world of financial trading.

The Bank was incorporated by Act of Parliament in 1694 with the immediate aim of raising funds to allow the Government to wage war in the Low Countries.

It did the same during the Napoleonic Wars a century later, by which time it had developed into the nation's largest and most prestigious financial institution. Dubbed "The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street", and privately owned until 1946, when



Old Lady of Threadneedle Street: early cartoon

Eddie George. Inevitable references to "Bank of England" were swift.

Howard Davies, who succeeded Mr Pennant-Rea, found himself in a world where concierges are called footmen, and rooms are

known as parlours. In an interview last October, he said: "It might be slightly odd that when you come to a meeting to discuss monetary policy, there is a man with a pink coat who's making sure everybody's there, and tea and

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Boxing champion inflicted fearful damage on guest, court told

By RICHARD DUKE



Benn: denies assault

THE former world boxing champion Nigel Benn inflicted such "fearful damage" to a fellow nightclub guest by hitting him in the face with a glass ashtray that his victim believed he was going to die, a court was told yesterday.

Raymond Sullivan, 33, needed 105 stitches in his nose after he was allegedly attacked without provocation by Benn in a West End nightclub last September. Paul Dodgson, for the prosecution, told Middlesex Guildhall Crown Court: "Mr Sullivan heard the sound of

breaking glass and the next thing he knew was a crunching pain to the front of his face.

"It seems that it was caused by a fist wielding something like an ashtray."

"Mr Sullivan fell to the floor and felt as if he was drowning. He was on the floor on his knees and all he could feel was excruciating pain to his face. He felt he was going to die. He didn't see who it was who had done this to him."

Each time the victim tried to struggle to his knees, he was allegedly kicked back down by the ex-super middleweight titleholder.

who was described by one witness as looking "really angry" and "gritting his teeth" during the assault.

Mr Dodgson said that witnesses at Legends nightclub then saw Mr Benn kick Mr Sullivan, 33, leaving his legs black and blue, before he was pulled away by bouncers.

Mr Dodgson told the jury: "The boxer allegedly ran off into the night."

The jury was shown photographs of the injuries which were taken by the surgeon who operated on Mr Sullivan at University College Hospital to repair internal and external

damage to his nose. Mr Sullivan, a ticket agent, who knew Mr Benn, was likely to be scarred for life.

The court was told Mr Benn and Mr Sullivan had been sitting at different tables in what is known as the VIP area of the nightclub when for some reason the boxer attacked Mr Sullivan.

Mr Dodgson told the jury of four

women and eight men that Mr Sullivan, a regular customer at the club, had been drinking in its VIP area and had had about three vodka and oranges when he saw some friends outside trying to get in. He went to the door to help

them. As he did so, he passed Mr Benn, who was seated at a nearby table. Although they knew each other, not a word passed between them. The next thing he knew was a crunching pain to the front of his face, and it seems from other witnesses that that crunching pain was caused by a fist wielding something like an ashtray in it."

Mr Dodgson said: "Mr Sullivan fell to the floor. He felt like he was drowning. He couldn't seem to breathe. He tried to get up but all he could recall was being knocked back down.

"He couldn't see anything. All he

could feel was the excruciating pain. He thought wrongly but perhaps understandably that he was going to die."

Mr Sullivan was led to the kitchen area of the nightclub, his face streaming with blood, and he believed he had been blinded in the attack.

Mr Benn, also 33, of Beckenham, Kent, denies wounding Mr Sullivan last September with intent to do him grievous bodily harm. He also pleads not guilty to a lesser, alternative allegation of unlawful wounding.

The trial continues today.

Attack 'halted by kick' from woman, 75, who was inspiration for Bond secretary

How Miss Moneypenny brought a mugger to heel

By JOANNA BALE



Sir Julian Ridsdale: "It's her Irish blood"

THE woman who was the inspiration for Ian Fleming's Miss Moneypenny demonstrated an old-fashioned move in self-defence when she was confronted by a mugger as she tried to get out of her car, a court was told yesterday. The robbery came to a swift end after a well-aimed kick with a high-heeled shoe.

Victoire, Lady Ridsdale, was an assistant to the James Bond author in intelligence during the war. In the Bond spy novels, Miss Moneypenny was the long-time secretary to the security chief M, and James Bond's verbal sparring partner.

Now 75, Lady Ridsdale was with her husband, Sir Julian, 81, a former Conservative MP, when they were ambushed by two men as they arrived at their home in The Boltons, Kensington, after an evening out.

She told Southwark Crown Court: "I put my hand up to get out of the car and the first thing I knew was that my watch had been snatched off. He was right on top of me standing over me. He said: 'Just make it easy for me or I'll

hurt you.' The next thing he was pulling at my rings on my wedding finger. They are very tight. I can't get them off myself." Banging her hand down on the witness box, she added: "That was just too much for me. As I had a good pair of solid high heels on, I kicked out, thank goodness!"

Asked by Robin Griffiths, for the prosecution, if she made contact, she replied: "Yes, I think so. He pulled back then I kicked him in the groin and he doubled up in pain."

Counsel told the jury: "She may be of retirement age, but she was not prepared to submit to the indignity without response. She leant back, raised her right leg and kicked the intruder in a place where it appeared to hurt."

She said that after she kicked her attacker, her disabled husband and his assistant, Peter Bennett, who had also been in the car, began calling out for their grandson, Rupert, who lived near by. The robbers, worried by the commotion, fled.

Two men arrested minutes later by uniformed police deny conspiracy to rob on January

25. They are Christopher Wynter, 18, unemployed, of West Hampstead, north London, and David Stephen, an office junior, of Alexandra Palace, north London, who is alleged to have attacked Lady Ridsdale.

Miss Ridsdale told the court: "I did not see enough of the man to identify him. He was fairly stocky and wearing a crash helmet with a visor."

She said she still suffered pain from the attack, during which her gold watch was stolen. A gold watch was found discarded near by.

"My shoulder and arm hurt

afterwards. My shoulder still does. My watch had gone before I was even aware of it. It is an unusual piece. I don't know how much it is worth."

Sir Julian, who walks with the aid of a stick, was MP for Harwich for 38 years. He said he had been powerless to help his wife because he was unable to get out of the car. He told the court: "I don't know if it's her Irish blood, but when she is attacked, she attacks back. She opened the door and kicked out at him very hard."

"He grabbed my wife's finger and was trying to pull off her rings. It is very unpleasant when you can't do anything. He uttered threats to both of us. He wanted us to be quiet and just let him get on with stealing my wife's rings and be assaulted. We had to take action to frighten him." The trial continues.

□ The family have had brushes with crime in the past. In 1964, Sir Julian and his daughter, Penelope, traded punches with two men who tried to rob them in the street outside their Kensington home. They sold their country home in Essex in 1988 after five break-ins.



Lady Ridsdale yesterday. She said: "I had a good pair of solid high heels on"

WPC threatened to kill her chief, sex bias case told

By A STAFF REPORTER



Safety fears as galley prepares for Atlantic trip

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH

A REPLICA 15th-century Hebridean galley powered by oars and a single square sail is to defy the advice of marine experts by recreating a 1,200-mile Viking voyage across the north Atlantic.

The 40ft open wooden vessel is expected to encounter ice floes and stormy seas on its journey from Inverness to Cape Farewell on the southern tip of Greenland when it sets sail this month.

In 1992 the *Aileach* caused a major sea rescue after its rudder smashed in high seas 60 miles west of Orkney on a voyage to the Faeroe Isles. One of its crew was knocked unconscious and it had to be towed into Stromness by a lifeboat.

Yesterday Nick Parker, 45, a language lecturer at Bangor University who has organised the voyage, said he was confident the galley was "as safe as any other boat". It had all the necessary safety, communication and modern navigational equipment to cope with emergencies.

The Maritime Safety Agency in Aberdeen expressed serious reservations about the trip and said it would be inspecting the vessel this week to see whether safety constraints could be imposed on the ground that the voyage was commercial.

Detective Superintendent Peter Hanks, who is alleged to have written offensive reports on her personal file.

Miss Walsh, who left the Metropolitan force in December 1995 for medical reasons after withdrawing a claim of sexual harassment, said she had supported WPC Kellaway in her action for 17 months until April this year. She added that WPC Kellaway had said no one would be safe at the hearing "because she was taking the knife and she would use it."

After the hearing was adjourned yesterday, Thames Valley Police said it was aware of the alleged threats.

"We remain concerned for Miss Kellaway's health and deeply regret that matters

have reached this stage."

Pay protest that sank an admiral

By DAREH GREGORIAN

A RETIRED Rear Admiral was dismissed as harbourmaster because of his "inappropriate" behaviour, an industrial tribunal ruled yesterday. Admiral Tim England, 55, had refused to hand over accounts to Hampshire County Council when he was refused a £6,000 pay rise.

The Admiral served on HMS *Invincible* in the Falklands with Prince Andrew before he took the job of harbourmaster on the River Hamble, Hampshire, which he said was "small beer" compared to his naval responsibilities. He left his £60,000 a year naval position for the £30,000 harbourmaster job to spend more time with his wife and two children. But he

angered managers after requesting to close the harbour office two days a week because of understaffing.

The tribunal was told that the harbour authority chairman, Patrick Allan, told the Admiral not to treat the job "like the Battle of the Nile".

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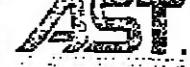
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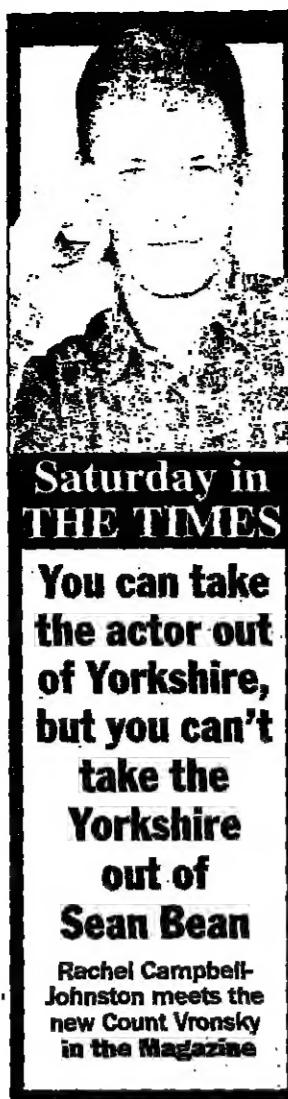
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but you can't
take the
Yorkshire
out of
Sean Bean

Rachel Campbell-
Johnston meets the
new Count Vronsky
in the Magazine

BBC wasn't young enough, says head lured to Channel 4

BY CAROL MIDGLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL JACKSON, the BBC chief chosen to succeed Michael Grade as the chief executive of Channel 4, yesterday accused his former employer of neglecting women, the young, and viewers outside southern England.

Mr Jackson, 39, who is still tipped as a future Director-General of the BBC, said that a failure to cater properly for large chunks of the population was one of its biggest weaknesses.

At Channel 4, he said, he wanted to encourage talent and innovation, and would defend "programmes that are rude, as long as they are good shows".

He also indicated that shows such as *Friends* and *ER* were hugely successful. Channel 5's director of programmes Dawn Airey has declared she is keen to buy them, but they are contracted to Channel 4 until 2000. Mr Jackson said: "There is a price over which it would be foolish to pay for a programme that you don't control and isn't feeding back into British production. At the

women as opposed to men, talking to young people, and talking to people outside the South of England."

These were strengths he would nurture at Channel 4, he said. "They are to do with the relationship with an audience that trusts Channel 4, which knows the channel is on its side."

He confirmed he was not interested in poaching from the BBC: "I am leaving the splendid quarters of White City behind me. I am interested in talking to people here."

He acknowledged that

shows such as *Friends* and *ER* were hugely successful. Channel 5's director of programmes Dawn Airey has declared she is keen to buy them, but they are contracted to Channel 4 until 2000. Mr Jackson said: "There is a price over which it would be foolish to pay for a programme that you don't control and isn't feeding back into British production. At the

end of the day, the channel will be remembered for what it puts back into British production and the talent it has encouraged." He would defend its reputation for controversial programmes. It has been criticised by the Independent Television Commission for offending public taste with shows such as *Brookside*, which included an incest plotline.

The relationship with television watchdogs should be "one of candid self-criticism," he said. "If you have got something wrong, hold your hands up and admit it."

"If there is something that you passionately believe is right, then defend it. I think the channel has a good record of doing that in the past."

Mr Jackson said he had not left the BBC in protest at its changes. "I am supportive of the changes that have taken place. I did have a great job — it was a real wrench to leave."

But this is the best job in British broadcasting."

A BBC spokesman said of Mr Jackson's criticisms: "We are a little puzzled, because BBC1 has the best audience profile of any channel. *EastEnders* alone demonstrates that the BBC gets a great deal right in respect of women and

young people. BBC2 has trounced Channel 4 in the ratings for two years, and we are seeking to reinforce its strength by appealing to young people and women."

There was no news on John Willis, Channel 4's director of programmes, who in the past has called Jackson a "copycat



Michael Jackson, right, with the Channel 4 chairman Sir Michael Bishop

villain" and was hotly tipped to get the chief executive's job. Mr Willis is on holiday this week, and some staff believe he may leave, but Mr Jackson paid tribute to his talent and said he was looking forward to working with him.

Media, pages 22-23

McAliskey too sick to attend court

Roisin McAliskey, whose extradition is being sought by Germany in connection with a mortar attack in Osnabrück, was too ill to be brought to court yesterday for a hearing.

Miss McAliskey, 25, who is expecting a baby this month, and is being held in Holloway prison, was said by her lawyer, Gareth Peirce, to be using a wheelchair. Ronald Bartle, the chief stipendiary magistrate at Bow Street, remanded her in custody for another 28 days but asked for a detailed medical report. He said the note from the prison stated merely that she was tired and uncomfortable. Ms Peirce said that Miss McAliskey could only sleep sitting up and that her legs were painful. She is also suffering from an infection.

Suspect dies

A fencing teacher sought by police over allegations that he indecently assaulted pupils at Brentwood School, Essex, was found dead in his car at Brighton. Gareth Stafford-Bull, 41, went missing from his home on April 14.

Holiday boy safe

A Dutch boy who vanished on a family holiday in London on Monday was found at Dover. Cornelius Jansen, 12, had a note saying "Please get me home", thought to have been written by his brother Mario, 15, who is still missing.

Minced stake

A butcher ground up £840 when he switched on a mincer. Bert Moore, 70, of Mortehamstead, South Devon, did not know his son Barry, 36, had hidden the mincer there. They spent hours piecing notes together.

RAF's cow slip

The Defence Ministry has paid a Carmarthenshire farmer £25,000 for the death of a cow frightened by a low-flying Tornado. The Holstein Friesian, which died from abortion complications, had taken generations to breed.

Cones amnesty

West Midlands Police is offering a month's amnesty for students at Wolverhampton University who are believed to have stolen more than 100 yellow traffic cones as souvenirs. The force is running low on the £3,500 cones.

Hunt for drugs to ease Parkinson's

MEDICAL BRIEFING

ANTHONY SARGEANT, who died recently after suffering from severe Parkinson's disease, took as keen an interest in his own condition, it is said, as he did in tank technology during the war, when he was scientific adviser to Montgomery. He later became Chief Scientific Adviser to the Home Office.

Most doctors enjoy treating well-informed patients, particularly when they are able to display scientific detachment.

Research by Dr Walther Birkmayer, an Austrian, led to the introduction in the 1960s of the use of levodopa (Sinemet, Madopar) to restore the biochemical balance of the chemical messengers dopamine and acetylcholine by reinforcing the inadequate amounts of natural dopamine produced by patients with Parkinson's.

Levodopa is a precursor of dopamine, which is changed in the brain to it. The lack of dopamine is the cause of the abnormalities in muscle control, slow, stiff movements, the tremor and the lack of facial expression that characterise Parkinson's. After a variable number of years, levodopa becomes less efficient.

Since the 1960s, research has continued in the hope that new drugs might be found that would either supplement

or enhance the action of levodopa. Some like selegiline are thought to prevent the breakdown of dopamine, thereby prolonging the action of levodopa. But its present status in the treatment of Parkinson's is now being reassessed.

Other drugs, bromocriptine, lisuride, and pergolide, stimulate the dopamine receptors in those parts of the brain that react to them, therefore increasing the effect of any circulating dopamine. An alternative to increasing the effect of dopamine is to decrease the action of the chemical messenger, acetylcholine.

Parkinson's still cannot be cured. The search for a surgical treatment has proved unrewarding. Medical treatment has, however, improved in the past 30 years, and this together with better physical therapies has improved the quality of life for patients.

Not all patients have Mr Sargeant's scientific background, but all patients with Parkinson's disease deserve to have a careful assessment from an expert so that the treatment may be tailored to their individual needs.

DR THOMAS
STUTTAFORD

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Wildlife study blames pesticides as dozen varieties decline by up to 89 pc in 25 years

Birds perish as farmers 'drench fields in poison'

By MICHAEL HORNBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

PESTICIDES are almost certainly the chief cause of a sharp decline in at least 12 varieties of farmland birds over the past 25 years, according to a report yesterday.

The five-year study, commissioned by the Department of the Environment from a consortium of wildlife bodies, calls for reduced use of chemicals and other changes in agricultural practice to improve the habitat for birds that nest and feed on farms.

Launching the report in London, Julian Pettifer, the broadcaster and conservationist

said it was hardly surprising that birds were declining when the countryside was being "drenched in poison". In many places the dawn chorus of birdsong was now more like "barber's shop quartet", if it could be heard at all.

Graham Wyane, a director of conservation at the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, said: "We need to look at a range of reforms, including a ban on pesticide use and wholesale changes in the way farming is subsidised."

The report finds that pesticides "cannot be ruled out as a

major factor" in the decline of tree sparrows (down 89 per cent), turtle doves (77 per cent), bullfinches (76), song-thrushes (73), lapwings (62), reed buntings (61), skylarks (58), linnets (52), swallows (43), blackbirds (42) and starlings (23). Mark Avery, head of research at the RSPB, said:

"We believe there is good circumstantial evidence for a link between pesticides and the decline in these birds."

The authors of the report admit they have definite proof of the role of pesticides only in the case of grey partridges, which have declined by 82 per cent. A 30-year study by the Game Conservancy Trust on the South Downs in Sussex has shown clearly how pesticides have reduced the food supply of partridge chicks.

During the first 21 days of life, the chicks need a nutrient-rich diet of beetles, caterpillars, sawflies and other insects. Pesticides deal the birds a double blow by killing the insects directly and destroying the broad-leaved weeds on which they live.

One solution pioneered by the trust is the creation of "conservation headlands", six-metre-wide strips at the edge of arable fields where spray



In decline, clockwise from top: blackbird (down 42 per cent), reed bunting (61), tree sparrow (89) and skylark (58)

ing is kept to a minimum.

Farms using this method have restored partridge chick survival to the level that existed before the widespread use of pesticides.

Other birds which may owe their decline in part to in-

creased pesticide use are the corn bunting (down 80 per cent), spotted flycatcher (73), mistle thrush (39), yellow wagtail (31), dunlin (29) and yellow hammer (17).

Herbicides and fungicides, rather than insecticides, are

identified as the main threat.

By the 1990s all arable fields

were being sprayed on average up to three times a year, compared with no more than annually 20 years earlier.

□ At least ten million birds

are killed on the roads each

year, according to a report in

British Wildlife.

The house sparrow is the most common

victim, followed by the black-

bird, song thrush, pheasant and chaffinch. Hedge-lined

country roads take the worst

toll.

Boarding schools urged to copy hotels

By JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

BOARDING schools should banish the spectre of *Tom Brown's Schooldays* and reverse 20 years of decline by reinventing themselves as "sleep-over schools", their chairwoman said yesterday.

Ros McCarthy, the headmistress of Cobham Hall School, Kent, said that boarding schools were handicapped by an outdated view of how they operated, and should market themselves as hotels for children.

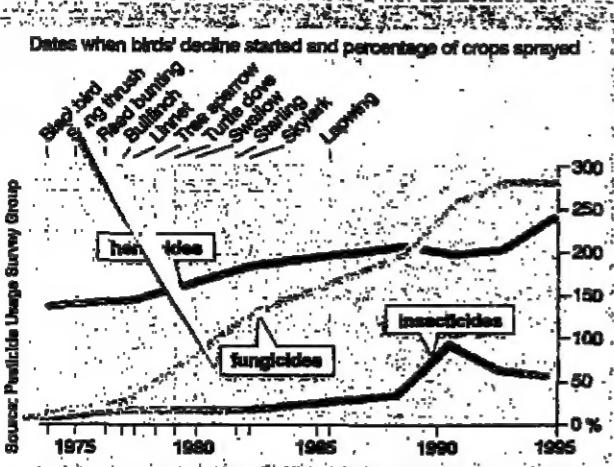
The independent schools' annual census, to be published next week, is expected to show another fall in the number of boarders. But in her chairwoman's address to the Boarding Schools Association, Mrs McCarthy quoted the example of Heath Mount School, Hertfordshire, which won 70 converts to boarding by introducing "sleep-overs" for day pupils.

At the annual conference in Ambleside, Cumbria, Mrs McCarthy told head teachers: "Perhaps in this day and age we should adopt more user-friendly terms and become known as 'sleep-over schools'. Children and parents understand this concept and find it very attractive."

The scheme, adopted for children's parties, has enabled Heath Mount to buck the trend for preparatory school boarding, where the decline has been at its steepest nationally. The youngest children can sleep at school one night a week, older pupils up to five.

Anthony Burstow

No action is to be taken by police against Anthony Burstow, who was reported on September 3, 1996, to be under investigation for attempting to contact from Bullingdon prison a woman he had been convicted of inflicting psychological grievous bodily harm to by stalking. He did not attempt to write to the woman, nor was any letter intercepted or found in his possession.



Forecasters promise more snow as schools and roads are shut

By DAREK GREGORIAN

SNOW, sleet and gales battered most of Britain yesterday, shutting schools and stranding 45 day-trippers on a remote island overnight. Forecasters predicted that the cold spell, coming immediately after the hot start to the month, would continue at least until the weekend, with much of the country expecting sleet and snow.

Michael Dukes of the Press

Association Weather Centre said: "It is not going to be quite so cold, but it will still be pretty chilly. There will be blizzards and wind-chill factors down as low as -10C in the north Scottish hills." Maximum day temperatures would range from 5C in northern Scotland to 15C on the south coast of England.

For the first time in 14 years, large areas of North Wales woke up to a thick blanket of May snow yesterday, with the low-lying Vale of

Clywd in Denbighshire particularly hard hit. Six inches of snow was reported in villages around Ruthin and falls closed two schools in St Asaph.

One lane of the A55 North Wales Expressway, the main artery into the region, was closed early in the morning as snowploughs battled to keep traffic moving. In South Wales, snow fell along the A465 Head of the Valleys road.

The high winds stranded the day-

trippers on the seabird haven of Skomer Island, off the Pembrokeshire coast. The pleasure boat that had gone to pick them up on Monday was damaged by stormy seas and had to be towed away from rocks by a lifeboat.

Mike Reynolds, one of the trip organisers Dale Sailing, said: "Fortunately, holiday chalets were available, so they had beds and blankets and food and could keep warm." They were returned to the

mainland yesterday. The wintry weather, which broke out on the day Co-op stores announced they were halving prices on suntan lotions, was caused by a cold front from the Arctic that blew away the warm air that had covered much of the country for the previous few days.

Temperatures plunged overnight to -5C at Loch Glascarnoch, in the Highlands, and high ground in northern Britain experienced sleet

or snow showers. There were warnings from the AA of black ice in the Borders and Dumfries and Galloway in southern Scotland.

London recorded 12mm of rain yesterday, more than for all of March and April. The wet weather, accompanied by a cold snap with night frosts, is expected to continue at least until Friday, said the London Weather Centre.

Forecast, page 24

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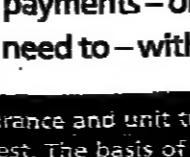
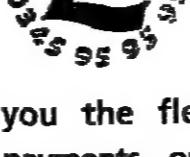
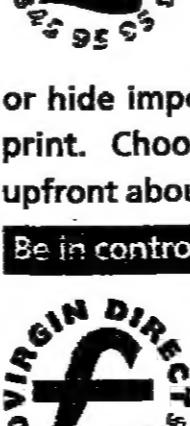
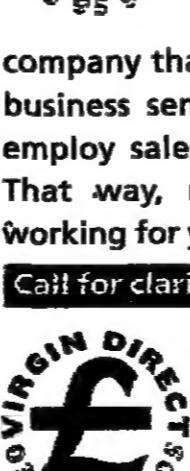
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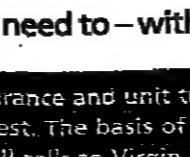
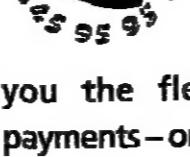


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Transatlantic novels take four of six places on £30,000 prize shortlist



Novels and novelists: Margaret Atwood (Canada), Deirdre Madden (Britain), Jane Mendelsohn (US), Anne Michaels (Canada), E. Annie Proulx (US), and Manda Scott (Britain).

Women's talent for fiction goes west

BY ERICA WAGNER, LITERARY EDITOR

FOUR out of the six novels on the shortlist for the Orange Prize for Fiction, Britain's most lucrative literary prize, are by North American writers, reviving the debate over the state of British fiction.

The Orange prize, worth £30,000, was first awarded in 1996 to the British novelist Helen Dunmore for *A Spell of Winter*. Last year, debate focused on the merits, or otherwise, of a prize open only to women.

Now the co-founder of the prize, the novelist Kate Mosse, noting that 60 per cent of publishers' entries for the prize were North American, hopes the

publication of the shortlist will encourage debate about the state of publishing in Britain. "You could speculate about the prevalence of North American writing on some publishers' lists, and wonder how much respect some British publishers have for British writing," she said.

Novels by the British novelists Jeanette Winterson (*Cut Symmetries*) and Beryl Bainbridge (*Every Man for Himself*), both strong contenders on the Orange long list released in March, have been dropped in favour of novels by Canadian writers — *Alias Grace* by Margaret Atwood, and *Fugitive Pieces* by Anne Michaels — and by Americans — *Accordian Crimes* by E. Annie

Proulx, and *I Was Amelia Earhart* by Jane Mendelsohn. Mendelsohn and Michaels are first-time novelists. Deirdre Madden (*One by One in the Darkness*) from Northern Ireland, and Manda Scott (*Hen's Teeth*), who is Scottish, make up the British contingent on the list.

Lisa Jardine, the author and critic who is chairman of this year's judges, said that part of the reason for such a strong North American showing was the strong tradition of women's writing there. "For 30 years writing has been taught in colleges over there; there tends to be much less self-consciousness. I was very struck by the confidence and maturity of North

American writing — a kind of 'Look, no hands' bravura."

But Dan Franklin of Cape, the publishing company that produced Jane Mendelsohn's novel, denies that there is a bias among publishers towards North American writing. "When I see a manuscript, I certainly don't think 'Oh, how wonderful, that's American'."

Franklin agrees that schools writers can produce very polished first novels. "But do they develop as interestingly as, say, A. L. Kennedy or Barbara Anderson?" The shortlist says as much about the tastes of the judges as about publishers' tastes."

Leading article, page 19



Lisa Jardine: struck by North American style

Historians lose battle to save War of the Roses site from housebuilders

BY TIM JONES

GASTONS FIELD, the site of the Lancastrians' defeat in the Wars of the Roses in 1471, is to have housing built on it. Tewkesbury Borough Council decided yesterday.

The decision to grant planning permission outraged English Heritage, Tewkesbury Town Council and members of the Battlefields Trust, who condemned it as "an act of civic vandalism".

The Government will now decide whether to endorse the permission or hold a public inquiry.

A spokeswoman for English Heritage said: "We remain vehemently opposed to this proposal. They have taken their decision in spite of our exhortation to preserve this precious site."

Joe Kent, the borough council leader, infuriated some

historians when he claimed that there was no evidence that the area where the houses could be built had been part of the battlefield. The Gastons is now a clipped, gently rising Gloucestershire meadow within sight of Tewkesbury Abbey. On May 4, 1471, it was the scene of dreadful carnage.

Margaret of Anjou, the wife of the deposed Lancastrian Henry VI, had landed at Portland with an army from France intent on wresting the Crown back from the upstart Yorkist Edward IV and freeing her husband from Edward's custody.

Exhausted by their march, the Lancastrians turned to face their pursuers outside Tewkesbury Abbey. To the south was ranged the Yorkist army under Edward, his brother Richard (later Rich-

ard III) and the Duke of Clarence. From the beginning of the battle went badly for the forces of Anjou.

The Duke of Somerset, commanding the Lancastrian right, led his men towards the Severn in a flanking move to get out of range of the Yorkist archers, but encountered spearmen concealed in the woods of what is now Tewkesbury golf course. As he desperately attempted to regroup

his lines, the duke's men were cut down in the field which is known still as Bloody Meadow.

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Much of the battlefield has already been used for housing, a cemetery and sewage works. A spokesman for Saga Homes Merton said that they had undertaken to provide a car park and other amenities for the rest of the battlefield.

Volcanoes may damage ozone

BY NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

VOLCANOES might be doing more damage to the ozone layer than man-made pollutants, a scientist said yesterday.

It has been argued that the build-up of artificial chemicals during the 20th century has led to the thinning of the layer, which protects the Earth from the Sun's ultra-violet rays.

Many countries are phasing out the substances, such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which are found in aerosols and other products.

But John Smellie, a volcanologist of the British Antarctic Survey, believes that volcanic gases might be expelling ozone-damaging chemicals in much larger quantities than those derived from man-made sources. Dr Smellie agreed that action was needed to curb man-made pollution. "But often we ignore what the planet is doing itself."

Volcanoes had been around for far longer than man-made pollutants, he said. "It may be what we are seeing in the atmosphere and the ozone layer is a natural effect."

The impact of volcanoes on global warming is already known. Rising temperatures were often cited when the gases and particles expelled in the eruption of Mount Pinatubo, in the Philippines, in 1991, led to a cooling of 0.5 degrees C.

Dr Smellie's studies are focusing on the South Sandwich Islands of the South Atlantic, including Bellinghausen Island. There, two continental plates are colliding, creating volcanoes, with huge quantities of steam and gases. His work could confirm that active volcanoes are producing ozone-damaging chemicals.

Royal website beats Spice Girls for hits

BY KATHRYN KNIGHT

THE Queen's Internet website has proved so popular that it has overtaken even the Spice Girls to become one of the world's most visited sites.

Since its introduction by the Queen on March 6, the 165-page website has been accessed 12.5 million times, or 6.25 million per month, compared with the 2.5 million "hits" a month on the all-girl band's site. More than a million accesses were made on the royal pages in the first 24 hours, it was revealed yesterday.

The site was extended yesterday with an extra 85 pages of royal history, profiles and

speeches, illustrated by pictures from the Royal Collection. By tapping in <http://www.royal.gov.uk> computer users around the world can now tour some of Buckingham Palace and receive news of royal visits.

National curriculum history advisers have collaborated with the Palace to write the text, from the Anglo-Saxon kings to George VI. A Palace spokesman said: "Americans are the most frequent visitors, but we have interest from all over the world. The Queen is very pleased."

Exhausted by their march, the Lancastrians turned to face their pursuers outside Tewkesbury Abbey. To the south was ranged the Yorkist army under Edward, his brother Richard (later Rich-

ard III) and the Duke of Clarence. From the beginning of the battle went badly for the forces of Anjou.

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'Conservative Party is a broad church. We won't find more worshippers by having only one theme'

Redwood plays down Eurosceptic record

BY ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN REDWOOD launched his campaign for the Tory crown yesterday with a promise that his leadership would not be bogged down by the European issue and that he would restore trust in the Conservatives over schools and the health service.

The Eurosceptic, who resigned as Welsh Secretary in 1995 to challenge John Major for the party leadership, said yesterday that he did not want to lead a factional party which was obsessed by one issue. The general election result had shown that people were deeply concerned about standards in schools, he said, acknowledging that the Tory government had closed too many small hospitals. It had broken or ignored the bond that existed between communities and their hospitals.

Speaking at a central London hotel, surrounded by some of the ten MPs who will run his campaign, he said that the Conservatives had to be united. Mr Redwood, challenged over reports that Conservative Central Office was briefing journalists against him, replied: "I would urge all Conservatives to realise that

whoever wins this leadership election has a task to bring the party back together again.

"It is not going to be easier for me if there has been too much factional infighting and personality briefing over the course of the campaign. I will not be doing it and I am asking my colleagues not to do it on my behalf."

"It will not help for people to be making foolish or negative comments about each other in the leadership challenge. I would urge all other candidates to be sensible in this respect." He said that the Tory party would have to use "every bit" of the talent left to it in Parliament by the election. The defeated Tory MPs would return quite quickly, "when the Conservative Party has reconnected with its roots and learnt the lessons of 1992 to 1997".

On policy on the European single currency, he said: "I will talk to my colleagues about how we can best oppose the Labour Government. Kenneth Clarke [also a Tory leadership candidate] and I are united on many aspects of the single currency. We both agree that a fudged single

currency would be extremely damaging to Britain and the rest of Europe."

Mr Redwood went out of his way to praise Mr Major, particularly his handling of the economy since 1992, when Britain had been bundled out of the exchange-rate mechanism.

Asked about the absence yesterday of some of the arch-Eurosceptics, such as Teresa Gorman, who turned out to back him when he declared for the leadership two years ago, Mr Redwood said: "I am not ashamed of the fact that they supported me then and I hope those who are still MPs will support me now. But I do want a broad appeal. The Conservative Party is a broad church. It must stay as a broad church."

"The problem is that we don't have enough worshippers at the moment. We have to find a lot more and we won't do that by having only one issue and one theme."

He emphasised that, unlike other leadership contenders, he could stand across the dispatch box from Tony Blair and not have to defend every last deed of the previous Tory Government.



New profile: Mr Redwood announces he is in the leadership race

The challenge that means never having to say sorry

The Vulcan versus the Klingon. Mission launches by John Redwood and Michael Howard are observed by Alan Hamilton

The Vulcan wears his hair a little longer these days, so you can no longer see his ears," he declared, adding moments later that the trouble with the past five years of Conservative politics was that there had been no fun. Heavens, Mr Redwood, where have you been?

If Mr Redwood is a Vulcan, Michael Howard must be the arch enemy from another galaxy, a Klingon. Mr Howard is an alien from east Kent, where right-wing Tories hang on to their seats and where there is probably zero gravity. Yesterday he launched his own space mission aimed at the Tory leadership.

His pad was the "institution of civil engineers", a veritable Cape Canaveral of political ambition, where Mr Blair launched the brilliantly successful Labour manifesto mission to the stars and Martin Bell fired his one-man rocket to photograph the dark side of Neil Hamilton.

Mr Howard mounted the rostrum in front of a portrait of Thomas Telford, the father of private-sector funding for motorway construction and pioneer of pay-as-you-drive. For Mr Howard, there was none of Mr Redwood's sack-cloth and ashes approach, no handwringing or apologies for five years of Tory misrule. "I have a clear sense of purpose. I have driven forward imaginative, successful and popular policies. The measures I introduced have worked. I am not easily sidetracked. I will lead from the front. I have remained loyal to the government."

Strong stuff for a man fuelled by nothing more than half a glass of Ballygowan Irish mineral water.

But hold on, Mr Howard. With the departure of Mr Portillo, are you not the principal surviving hate figure?

He directed the question back to the Planet Folkestone. "Look at the election result in my constituency," he retorted, a touch smugly.

While the purser and the boatswain baffle for the helm of this Starship Tory, the fight may be yet to the cabin boy. We await the declaration of intent from William Hague, who is just about tall enough to read the compass.

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Night the champagne deal fell flat

Hague accused of renegeing by Howard camp

BY ANDREW PIERCE AND PHILIP WEBSTER

STRICT secrecy surrounded the late-night meeting between William Hague and Michael Howard as they sipped champagne and thrashed out a deal over the leadership of the Conservative Party. But the deal fell flat.

The former Home Secretary had believed he was on the point of clinching Mr Hague's agreement to stand as his deputy in a "dream ticket" that Conservative MPs might have found irresistible. In the three days since John Major had stood down, the two men had spoken on the telephone several times about combining forces and taking on the other right-wing contenders, Peter Lilley and John Redwood.

Only a handful of the two former Cabinet colleagues' closest aides knew they were due to meet at 10pm to complete the deal at the Howard's heavily fortified Belgrave grace-and-favour house on Bank Holiday Monday.

Mr Hague, 36, was accompanied to South Eaton Place by Fiona Jenkins, his 27-year-old fiancée. He was warmly greeted by Mr Howard and his wife Sandra. The only other person in the terraced house was the veteran Eurosceptic MP Sir Michael Spicer, who is running Mr Howard's campaign.

There were no other witnesses to the hour-long meeting that has electrified the Tory leadership contest and caused a bitter rift in the camps of two men, who have been friends for some time.

Within an hour of Mr Hague arriving, the former Home Secretary had cracked open a bottle of Bollinger to celebrate what he regarded as an historic deal that he hoped would result in him winning the leadership of the Tory Party.

According to Mr Howard's people, Mr Hague, having agreed to stand down, would become deputy leader and

party chairman if Mr Howard won. However, if the deal was done, as the Howard camp maintains, Mr Hague went back on it.

Mr Hague has privately admitted to friends that he went along with Mr Howard's proposal at that meeting. But he did not believe he was giving his final assent and felt that there was scope for more discussion.

When he went home that night, his answering machine was full of calls from friends, senior and junior, pleading with him to stand in his own right. Not all of them knew he was close to a deal.

He spoke to many of them, and Ms Jenkins ventured her own opinion that he could take the chance that had presented itself.

The Hague team dismissed comparisons with the "Catherine Place conspiracy", the name given to the meeting of senior ministers who plotted Margaret Thatcher's downfall after the first inconclusive leadership ballot in 1990.

There was no treachery over champagne, one Hague supporter said. "But William admits there was a terrible misunderstanding over the extent to which a deal was struck. But he is sorry if Michael is upset and accepts the blame. If blame is being apportioned."

At 8am yesterday, after a sleepless night, Mr Hague called Mr Howard and told him he had changed his mind.

Mr Howard was deeply disappointed and tried to bring him round. But there was no going back this time.

It had all seemed so different the previous night. Early in the day the mood had been sombre.

The Howards were facing up to the brutal reality of life on the Opposition benches. The last trappings of government office, the front door keys, were being handed over the next day to Mo



Michael Howard, with his wife Sandra, arriving at the press conference to announce he would stand alone

Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary and the new mistress of the house. The suitcases were packed.

However, spirits soared throughout the day as Mr Howard, 55, became convinced that a deal would be struck. The champagne had been on ice since an extended mid-afternoon telephone call with Mr Hague, who was in his Yorkshire constituency.

It was during that call, friends of Mr Howard say, that Mr Hague agreed in principle not to let his name go forward.

There had been a series of telephone conversations dating back to Saturday, when Mr Howard initiated the contact. But even before Mr Hague spoke to Mr Howard on Monday afternoon it ap-

peared, according to his friends, that he had weakened in his resolve to fight.

Despite the pressure from some of his closest friends, such as Alan Duncan and Nigel Evans, who will run his leadership campaign, Mr Hague was tempted to be the number two. "Remember, he is getting married soon," one Hague supporter said. "He is deeply in love—he is realising that there other things in life."

The atmosphere was warm and convivial when Mr Hague and his fiancée arrived. Mr Howard felt emboldened to take the champagne out of the fridge and toast their pact. But they never shook hands on it.

The two men were friends. Mr Howard has made little secret of the fact he sees Mr Hague, the young pretender, as a future Tory leader. But not the next one. Mr Hague is equally effusive about Mr Howard's tough line in Cabinet against the government's wait-and-see policy on the single currency.

"It was the dream ticket," a Howard aide said. "We were convinced we had got them signed up before he arrived."

What is clear is that Mr Howard, when he went to bed, thought the deal was done.

He claimed yesterday, through his supporters, that it would have been announced at a joint press conference yesterday afternoon. Peter Lilley and John Redwood, the other candidates of the Right, might have been eclipsed. But

it never worked out. Far from being chastened, they were both delighted at the mud-slinging between their principal rival camps.

Mr Howard carried on yesterday with his launch. His friends claimed that Mr Hague's departure was no more than a hiccup. "This is a winning ticket, and always has been," one said. "The chance of having William on board popped up—now it's gone. But we are still in with a very good chance."

Sir Michael Spicer, witness to the South Eaton Place champagne deal that turned flat, was adamant: "A settlement was made. This is all very unfortunate."

Letters page 19

Now for the hard part — finding somewhere to sit

ALMOST 250 first-time MPs were yesterday trying to find their bearings, and some office space, in the Palace of Westminster.

For many, both tasks will prove considerably harder than getting elected. The building is labyrinthine, and until an office block under construction nearby has been completed there will not be enough rooms to go round.

To help out the newcomers, the Commons authorities had organised what was signposted as a "New Members'

Reception". Champagne and canapés were not on offer, but officials were dispensing advice on office accommodation, computer equipment and identity passes.

By lunchtime yesterday, Paul Burstow, the Liberal Democrat MP who unseated Lady Olga Maird in Sutton and Cheam, was streets ahead of at least one of his new colleagues. He had been given a lightning tour by Simon Hughes, MP for Southwark North and Bermondsey, who has had since his 1983 by-election victory to

Polly Newton watches as Westminster's newcomers take their first faltering steps — and find they face a fresh fight for seats

learn the route. Jackie Ballard, the newly-elected Liberal Democrat MP for Tauton, had meanwhile visited the party's election campaign team across the road.

Mr Burstow said the Hughes induction had borne fruit. "He has been very helpful in showing us everything we need to know quickly,

ly, like where to get our stationery."

Mrs Ballard was impressed and not a little envious. "You've got stationery, have you?" It appeared that the achievement might be enough to qualify Mr Burstow as her mentor.

Mr Burstow acknowledged graciously that, in the circumstances, three hours' experience was not to be sneezed at. "You have to become an old hand very quickly."

Across the room, Angela Smith, the new Labour MP for Basildon, was writing down her preferred office location (the limited space on offer is available both in the House itself and in nearby buildings). She admitted that she did so more in hope than expectation. "I would trade off a small office for a central

location, but there must be almost no chance of a new girl getting an office in the House," she said.

The need for a corner somewhere that she could call her own was pressing, however.

"I took 42 messages off the constituency office answering phone and I have nowhere to sit and get back to work."

Margaret Moran, the new Labour MP for Luton South, was taken aback by an encounter with a veteran Tory from the shires. "He said: 'Are you a new girl? I thought this is going to stop now. Then he said: 'I would advise you to get a pad in London, *rapidly*.' His parting shot? 'There are many women...'"

Ms Moran, former leader of Lewisham council in south London, was mischievously making plans to cater for the doubling of the number of female MPs. "I keep wanting to say: 'show us the sword room so we can turn it into a creche.'" She was also considering direct action to even out

the number of men's and women's lavatories with the aid of a screwdriver and a handful of new signs. "otherwise we'll have to queue forever."

The advent of 247 new MPs — the highest number since 1945 — has left the Commons' doorkeepers and policemen with their work cut out. They must learn to identify the newcomers as quickly as possible.

Eddie McKay, who has worked as a doorkeeper in the building for nine years, said it would take him about three weeks. Like his colleagues, he has a book of their photographs, which he will study at work and at home until he is confident that he has them off pat. "I tend to put them into groups — Scots, ladies, knights, silver-haired ones. That's how I do it."

It was part of a doorkeeper's job, he said, to make MPs' working lives as painless as possible. "We like to think we have got a bit of a calming effect."

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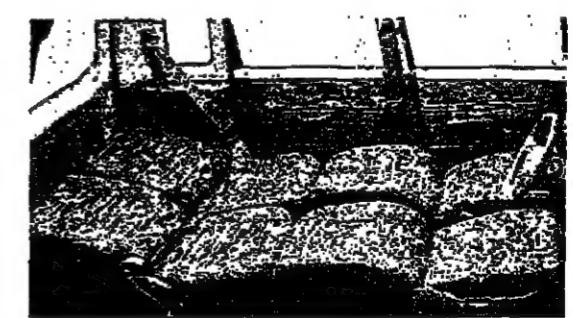
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Who does what in the Labour Government

The Times looks at all of Tony Blair's new ministers and the job that lies ahead of them

THE Prime Minister made the final appointments to his ministerial team yesterday. *The Times* has set out below the various departmental posts and job descriptions. Some specific portfolios have still to be allocated.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT



Secretary of State David Blunkett — planning early education and employment Bill.

Minister of State (employment and disability rights): Andrew Smith and Parliamentary Under-Secretary: Alan Howarth — welfare to work programme, implementing social chapter, employment and benefits issues, competitiveness, work permits, regional and urban policy, disability and equal opportunities.

Minister of State (school standards): Stephen Byers and Parliamentary Under-Secretary: Estelle Morris — responsible for literacy and numeracy initiatives, school funding, class sizes and the abolition of assisted places, league tables, national curriculum, teacher training and supply, nursery provision.

Minister of State (education and training in the Lords): Barbara Blackstone and Parliamentary Under-Secretary: Kim Howells — further and higher education, research, adult education, careers service, qualifications and examinations, training, establishing new technology for industry, new technologies.

In-tray: immediate action to implement welfare-to-work programme and implementing the Maastricht treaty's social chapter. Bill to set in train the abolition of the Assisted Places Scheme. Urgent action, too, on nurseries to phase out the use of vouchers without stranding children now in playgroups or private nurseries.

White Papers planned for June on the main commitments on education and employment, in preparation for a single Bill in the autumn. Dearing review of higher education report in July, prompting likely abolition of student grants and further expansion of universities.

TREASURY



Chancellor of the Exchequer: Gordon Brown.

Chief Secretary to the Treasury: Alistair Darling — control of departmental spending, conducting promised expenditure reviews.

Financial Secretary: Dawn Primarolo — customs, revenues and taxes.

Paymaster General: Geoffrey Robinson — Private Finance Initiative, privatisation issues, and welfare to work programme.

Economic Secretary: Helen Liddell — financial services, City regulatory work.

In-tray: writing Budget, probably to be held in June. Key decision will be to set the rate of windfall tax on privatised utilities.

Details of welfare-to-work measures to be tightened up. Plans to cut VAT on fuel from 5 per cent to 5 per cent.

Creative thinking about how and when to raise taxes without breaking manifesto pledge not to raise basic and top rate of income tax for five years.

Drawing up legislation for Bank of England to gain new independence to set interest rates.

HOME OFFICE



Secretary of State: Jack Straw — security issues, terrorism, royal matters and public expenditure.

Minister of State: Alan Michael — police, criminal policy, organised crime and voluntary sector.

Minister of State: Joyce Quin —

prisons minister, oversight of immigration and asylum, particularly with EU, mentally disordered offenders and probation.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary: Mike O'Brien — immigration and nationality case work, race and community relations, passports, constitutional issues.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary: George Howarth — prisons, fire service, liquor licensing, drugs and guns.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary: Lord Williams of Mostyn, QC — all Home Office matters in the Lords, constitutional issues.

severe disablement allowance, industrial injuries, war pensions, House of Lords spokesman on social security.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary: John Denham — fraud, methods of payment, pensions, National Insurance contributions, deregulation, statutory sick pay, statutory maternity pay, long-term care policy development.

In-tray: turning the welfare-to-work rhetoric of a hand up, not a hand out into reality. To get lone mothers with school-age children into work by offering career advice and information about childcare. Review of how to pay for long-term care of the elderly and financing of children aged 16 to 18. Review of second pensions. Fighting for parliamentary time to implement pension splitting for divorcees.

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT



Secretary of State: John Prescott — transport, environment and regions.

Minister of State: Michael Meacher — environmental protection, water, countryside, wildlife and habitats, health and safety.

Cabinet Minister of Transport: Gavin Stringer — transport.

Minister of State: Richard Caborn — regeneration and regional planning.

Minister of State: Hilary Armstrong — housing and local government.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary: Angela Eagle — energy efficiency and British Waterways Board.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary: Baroness Hayman — transport and environment in the Lords.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary: Nick Raynsford — London and capital's environment.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary: Glenda Jackson — transport for London and pro-roads lobby.

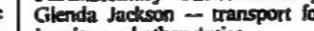
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In-tray: introduce devolution Bill for two-question referendum within weeks. Plebiscite on Scottish parliament by autumn. Getting young Scots back to work through scheme paid for by windfall tax on privatised utilities, reducing NHS waiting lists.

In-tray: comprehensive six-month review to start within next four weeks, including role of British troops in Germany. The ban on homosexuality to be raised with a view to possible lifting. Ensuring agreement with Germany, Italy and Spain on production phase of Eurofighter combat aircraft.

In-tray: sorting out precise nature of the role with new responsibilities previously handled by the Department of Trade and Industry and by the Treasury.

SOCIAL SECURITY



Secretary of State: John Prescott — transport, environment and regions.

Minister of State: Michael Meacher — environmental protection, water, countryside, wildlife and habitats, health and safety.

Cabinet Minister of Transport: Gavin Stringer — transport.

Minister of State: Richard Caborn — regeneration and regional planning.

Minister of State: Hilary Armstrong — housing and local government.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary: Angela Eagle — energy efficiency and British Waterways Board.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary: Baroness Hayman — transport and environment in the Lords.

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In-tray: department being re-arranged to "play key role in shaping Britain's future". Refusal of National Lottery proceeds to fund projects in NHS and education. Will focus on broadcasting and tourism. Reserved the right to review all millennium projects. Channel 4's future — what Labour has said it has no objection of privatising. Helping to ensure Britain stages World Cup in 2006.

DEFENCE



Secretary of State: John Reid — strategic defence review.

Minister of State: John Reid — expected to be Armed Forces Minister responsible for Gulf War illness, pay, women, Nato, arms control, defence budget, nuclear strategy, UN peacekeeping, Northern Ireland, policy on reserves.

Minister of State: John Gilbert (in the House of Lords) — expected to be Defence Procurement Minister, in charge of Trident programme, submarine disposal, equipment collaboration, defence exports, operational analysis.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary: John Spellar — environment, protection, service personnel, health and safety, training and education, medical, low flying.

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SCOTLAND



Secretary of State: Donald Dewar — entire portfolio of the Scottish Office.

Minister of State: Henry McLeish — home affairs and devolution.

Minister of State: Brian Wilson — education and industry.

Minister for Local Government and Transport: Malcolm Chisholm — development department and Commons spokesman on agriculture, environment, fisheries and forestry matters.

Minister for Health and the Arts: Sam Galbraith — health, social work, arts and sport.

Minister for Agriculture, the Environment and Fisheries: Lord Sewel of Gilmerton — Forestry Commission and Lords spokesman on Scottish Affairs.

In-tray: sorting out precise nature of the role with new responsibilities previously handled by the Department of Trade and Industry and by the Treasury.

WELSH OFFICE



Secretary of State: George Robertson — strategic defence review.

Minister of State: John Reid — expected to be Armed Forces Minister responsible for Gulf War illness, pay, women, Nato, arms control, defence budget, nuclear strategy, UN peacekeeping, Northern Ireland, policy on reserves.

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FOREIGN AID



Secretary of State: Robin Cook — responsibilities yet to be announced.

Minister of State: Derek Fatchett — Crown Prosecution Service and Serious Fraud Office prosecuting policy (eg war crimes, contempt proceedings, appeals against lenient sentences, prosecuting court in some lead cases).

Minister of State: Tony Lloyd — Europe.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary: Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean in the House of Lords.

In-tray: new approach in European partners. European summit in Amsterdam on June 17 to complete discussions on European enlargement and next phase of Maastricht treaty. G7 summit in Denver on June 22, the smooth handing over of Hong Kong to

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Blair tells incoming MPs to stick to new Labour line

By PHILIP WEBSTER
POLITICAL EDITOR

TONY BLAIR will today lay down the law to Labour's massive contingent of MPs, warning them that the party's landslide victory does not mean there can be any let-up in discipline or departure from the manifesto.

The victorious Parliamentary Labour Party is to meet in Church House, Westminster, a venue chosen because it is big enough to take all 418 Labour MPs and because for the first time in recent memory cameras are to be allowed in to

Prime Minister's first address to his Government will be captured on film

capture Mr Blair's address. But although a buoyant Mr Blair, excited by his first days in office, will congratulate them warmly on their success, his underlying message will be that the party can never take public support for granted and that it must govern precisely in the way it promised.

The huge triumph last Thursday meant that Mr Blair will have some 60 to 70 MPs more than he expected at today's meeting — and

while early studies have suggested that the majority are Blairite in outlook, there are clearly more old-style and municipal socialists than expected. There have been inevitable worries that they will may not hold as firmly to the cautious line on spending that has been imposed and accepted by the rest.

According to Mr Blair's aides, he will tell the MPs: "We ran as new Labour and we will govern as new Labour... and that the bigger than

expected majority places an added responsibility on us to do just that."

The message will be that the MPs are there in such large numbers because the party ran as new Labour "and they had better remember it," according to party sources.

Mr Blair's address to MPs is another example of his determination to keep tight, almost presidential, central control over his party and Government. While

suggestions that ministers will not be allowed to have lunches with journalists have been flatly denied, it is clear that Mr Blair has decided that the coordination of the Government's policies and message is essential.

Peter Mandelson, the new Minister without Portfolio, who is one of Mr Blair's closest advisers, is to chair a daily Downing Street meeting attended by press staff from No 10, Gordon Brown's office

and John Prescott's, to determine how the Government's strategy and message will be put across.

Alastair Campbell, Mr Blair's press secretary, has asked that all requests for interviews with ministers be cleared with him, and Jonathan Powell, the Chief of Staff, has made plain that policy pronouncements should be co-ordinated through him.

Mr Blair is seeing teams of ministers all this week — yesterday

it was Frank Dobson's health team — to tell them what he expects of them. Downing Street insiders say the strategy is to ensure that the lessons of Opposition, including the discipline of the election campaign, are carried through into government. "The Prime Minister does not believe that because you did the right things in Opposition you should suddenly stop in government. Ministers should understand what other ministers are doing and know the overall strategy," one insider said.

Simon Jenkins, page 18

I'm having far too much fun to put the boot in yet, says Banks

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

TONY BANKS behaved like any self-respecting soccer fan after a big win yesterday. He was an hour late getting back for an important date, he was still wearing his jeans, and he went straight round the corner for a drink with the lads.

His date was with civil servants waiting to welcome the new Minister of Sport. He emerged from the ministerial Rover at the Department of National Heritage sporting denim jeans, scuffed Dr Marten shoes and his trademark cheeky smile, after spending extra time kicking balls around West Ham's ground. From the looks on the faces of his waiting staff, they had never seen jeans on a Minister before.

Photographers suggested a more suitable setting would be the Sports Cafe round the corner. "Yeah, let's go there," said Mr Banks, and set off at a brisk trot, leaving the civil servants he had met 30 seconds earlier gulping like goldfish. One said: "I think things are going to be a bit different round here."

It was suggested that he had won his new job as a tactic by Tony Blair to keep

him too busy having fun to express his trenchant left-wing views. Mr Banks said: "If those were his feelings — what a lovely way to do it. He said 'I would like you to do it because you could bring a bit of fizz and spark to it.' I had been wondering what I was going to be doing."

A fair indication that the affairs of the ministry of fun were going to be more unusual than ever had come on the morning's *Today* programme, when Mr Banks responded to inquiries about how he would bring the 2006 World Cup to England. He could hardly be expected to have worked that out, he argued, when he didn't yet know where his department was situated.

Any Heritage mandarin who assumed he was having a little joke soon realised he wasn't when 12.30pm, his appointed arrival time at the offices of Trafalgar Square, came and went. Civil servants appeared periodically in the entrance hall and muttered to the waiting press that they weren't quite sure where he was. He was expected, "but it might be quite a while." There



Tony Banks as Minister for Sport. He said: "Give me a break. I've only just got the job. I'm not going to resign. This is like Heaven"

were rumours that he was at Upton Park, West Ham's ground, in his constituency, but they didn't know why.

He had indeed been at Upton Park, knocking footballs about for a camera crew on the pitch. Hence the jeans.

He said: "I'm the Minister of Sport, not the Foreign Secretary. I've been at a football club. I'd look silly in a suit. For a politician who likes sport, this is like heaven."

He still wanted to become

elected mayor of London one day. Asked what he would do if he violently disagreed with New Labour policy, he flashed back: "Give me a break. I've only just got the job. I'm not going to resign."

More crucial was the question of what he would do if his presence was required on government business, say a Council of Ministers meeting, which coincided with the appearance of Chelsea in the FA Cup Final. "I wouldn't go to

the ministers meeting. I couldn't possibly," he said, dismissing the question as a very silly one indeed. "I've got a ticket. A mate queued for them." It was pointed out that getting tickets was not something he needed to spend too much time worrying about any more. Mr Banks said that he would be seeking to articulate the interests of ordinary people, but that his first priority was to find his desk.

The hovering civil servants

looked relieved as he finally made his way to the department. "This is posh, isn't it?" he said as he crossed the threshold. The press asked if they could accompany him to his office. "Yeah, come on up," he said. His private secretary looked dubious. "Er, is it strictly necessary for everybody to come?" Mr Banks marched up like the Pied Piper.

"This is a bit rudimentary, it looks like a small prison

cell," he said as he was led into a modest office overlooking the National Gallery. His secretary said quickly that the department would be moving bigger offices because there were to be four Heritage Ministers.

As he sat down at his clean desk Mr Banks noticed his In, Out and Urgent trays. "All empty. Just as I like them," he breezed. His private secretary smiled a knowing smile. "At the moment," she said quietly.

Hamiltons may yet have more news for us

By RUSSELL JENKINS

CHRISTINE HAMILTON, wife of the unseated Tory MP for Tanton, is hoping that a lucrative career as an outspoken media personality beckons.

Much depends on her performance on BBC2's *Have I Got News For You* this Friday. She has admitted that she may be "eaten alive" but a programme fee of about £750 will help with legal bills.

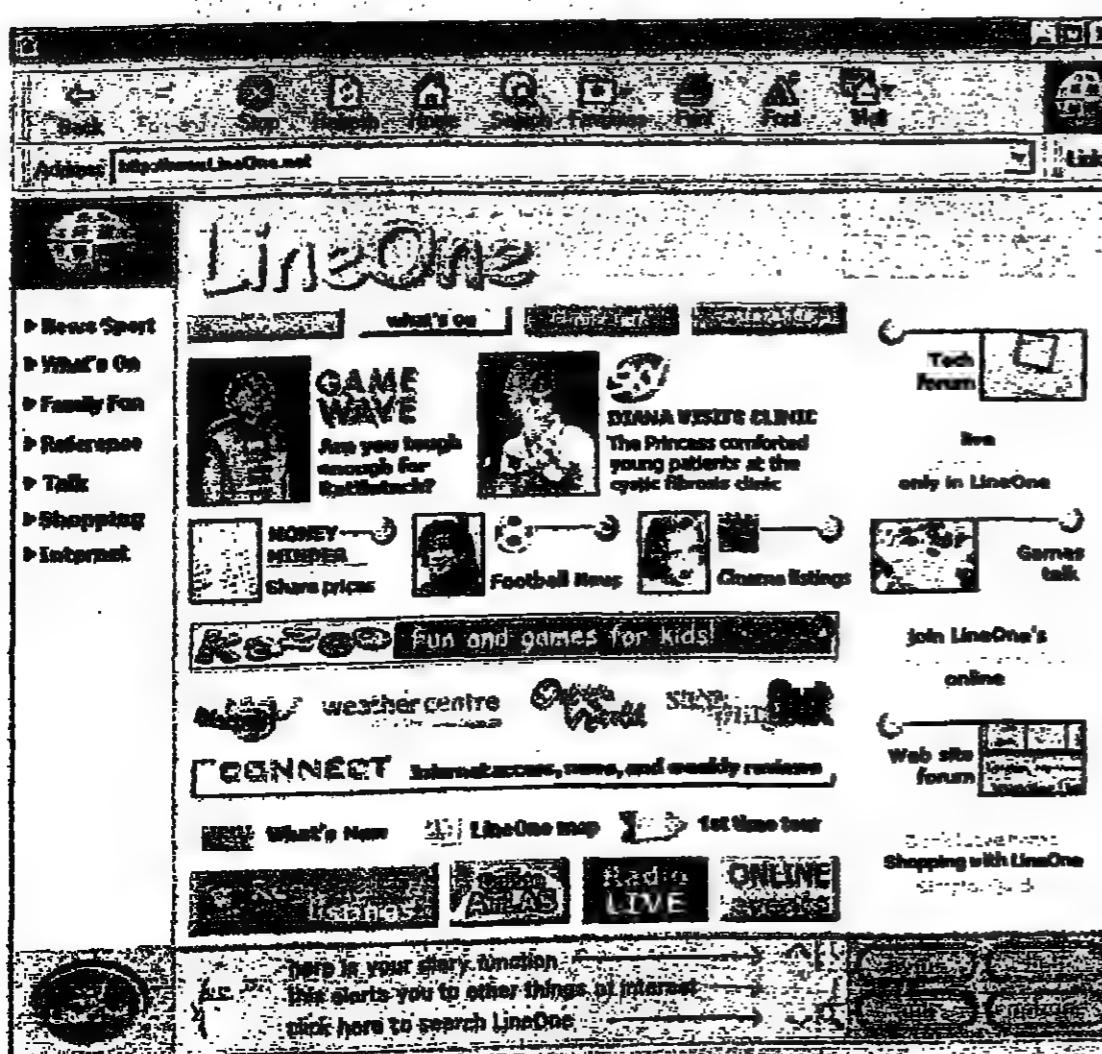
Yesterday on BBC1's *Kilroy*, Mrs Hamilton, 47, said that she had lost weight through worry and wakes up in the night fearful for the future. On Monday, she and her husband spoke in similar terms on BBC Radio Five Live.

Mrs Hamilton was her husband Neil's Commons secretary until Mr Hamilton, who was at the centre of the cash-for-questions controversy, was defeated at the general election by the former BBC war correspondent Martin Bell, standing as an independent. "I do feel apprehensive," she said yesterday. "We are both out of work. We are not selling the house, at least not yet, but it still worries and sickens me."

Her husband also suggested that he might be seeking a career in broadcasting. That, he claimed, was the "one place where questions about your integrity do not seem to matter". He did not think that he was "by-election material".



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Britain offered opt-out on frontier-free Europe

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN BRUSSELS

THE outline of a British exemption from a frontier-free Europe emerged yesterday at negotiations for the revamped European Union treaty, to be concluded at the Amsterdam summit next month.

The scheme, which seeks to accommodate Britain's refusal to lift passport controls, was given a cautious welcome by the new Government. The Blair administration, which embarked this week on a new relationship with its European partners, has promised to resist the Continental drive for open frontiers as strongly as its Conservative predecessor.

EU ministers acknowledged earlier this year that Britain and Ireland, which shares its passport regime, could not be persuaded to join in the move to enshrine frontier-free travel across the EU. However, the Dutch Government, which is chairing the treaty negotiations, waited until the Labour victory to table its draft accord.

Doug Henderson, the new Europe Minister, told his EU colleagues that the Government was favourably disposed but could not yet pronounce on the scheme, which is based on the Schengen pact. This is a

separate agreement, signed in 1985 and now incorporating all Continental EU states, that is in partial operation already.

France, Germany and the other leading states are keen to bring the Schengen agreement inside the EU as the best way of creating a promised "zone of freedom and security" across the Union. Britain doubts the wisdom of incorporating the pact, ready-made, without spelling out in detail the obligations of states in each area of frontier control, police co-operation and immigration

rules. The draft text, backed by most countries in principle, says Britain and Ireland are not bound by the Schengen agreement, but "may at any time accept some or all of the provisions".

British officials said London would require a much firmer guarantee that it would retain full authority over its own borders and complete freedom of decision on the entry of nationals from outside the EU.

Conservative officials hailed the scheme as the best way of creating a new British opt-out to cover its borders.

It is recognised that Britain and Ireland are islands," said Michel Barnier, the French European Affairs Minister.

The advantage of the Dutch plan, he said, is that it would give Britain and Ireland "a seat at the table" in decisions on frontiers and immigration.

Wide differences remain among EU states on the degree, if any, to which frontier and police matters are brought under the jurisdiction of the European Commission and the Court of Justice. Michel Patijn, the Dutch chairman of the treaty negotiations, said some role for the court and the Commission

would be proposed. This is resisted, however, by France, Denmark and several other states which want to keep frontiers in the domain of "inter-governmental" decision-making rather than centralised authority in Brussels.

The Dutch draft is a step towards clearing the ground for a new EU treaty in Amsterdam next month, but it has also served to highlight the differences that remain among other EU states. The arrival of Britain's new Euro-friendly Government, though delighting the rest of the EU, has exposed all the areas of disagreement among the rest of the Union.

This applied yesterday to discussion on extending majority voting in EU decision-making. With the end of the Conservative refusal to consider any reduction in the veto, it has become clear that there is no consensus yet among the rest on acceptable areas for change. The Blair Government is ready to consider majority voting on regional aid, the environment and industrial policy, but several governments are resisting the move in these areas.



Barnier: seat at table for Britain and Ireland



A Russian Defence Ministry soldier stands to attention during rehearsals in Moscow's Red Square for the May 9 Victory in Europe military parade

Nato and Russia near deal

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS
IN LUXEMBOURG

NATO and Russia returned to the bargaining table yesterday for what Evgeni Primakov, the Russian Foreign Minister, says may be the final negotiations on an agreement outlining a new relationship between Moscow and the Western alliance after Nato begins its eastward expansion.

Meeting in Luxembourg — the tiniest nation in the alliance — Javier Solana, the Nato Secretary-General, and Mr Primakov tried to work out the remaining details of a new Nato-Russian document. The Russians say they would like to sign the agreement at a ceremony in Paris on May 27. Nato is less confident that the negotiating session here, the fifth between Señor Solana and Mr Primakov, will be the last. But both sides reported they were getting closer to agreement.

Nato wants to complete a deal with Russia before its July 8-9 summit in Madrid, where it will name the first new members from Central and Eastern Europe. Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic are believed to be the leading candidates.

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Shortage of jobs threatens German monetary target

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

GERMANY'S ability to meet economic and monetary union's strict entry targets were under a cloud yesterday as the Government announced only a small improvement in the ailing labour market.

Unemployment is still breaking postwar records — the largest number out of work for April since 1945 — and Bernhard Jagoda, head of the Federal Labour Agency, admitted the slight improvement was almost entirely seasonal. "Economic growth is too weak to encourage an increase in the number of jobs," he said.

The seasonally unadjusted figures showed unemployment falling from 4.47 million in March to 4.34 million last month, an 11.3 per cent rate. But when seasonal factors were taken into account, 8,000 further jobs were lost during the past month.

The German Government had predicted a major turnaround in unemployment by the spring, relieving the strain on public borrowing. It has pledged to keep the public deficit down to 2.9 per cent of gross domestic product — just within the EMU reference value of 3 per cent.

But these plans were based on an average annual unemployment of 4.1 million and a strong 2.5 per cent growth. Export orders are booming, thanks to the mark's relative weakness, and there are signs that this is translating into higher investment and industrial orders. But Social Demo-

crats doubt that the growth forecast will be met.

The Government's difficulties in calculating the economic future are compounded by the logjam in negotiations over tax, pension and health reforms. Yesterday Norbert Blüm, the Labour Minister, appealed for progress on the most politically sensitive of those issues: pensions.

Herr Blüm and the rest of the Cabinet, aware next year's elections could be lost on the issue, are anxious to involve the Social Democrat Opposition in negotiating change.

The Government, however, chose to treat the unadjusted rate of unemployment as a significant breakthrough. "We can achieve a turnaround in the jobs market. The new figures show that," said Peter Hintze, secretary-general of Helmut Kohl's Christian Democratic Union.



Blüm: calling for quick overhaul of pensions

Vatican adds dash of purity to romance

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

A VATICAN-BACKED publisher is venturing into romantic fiction to try to woo Italian women away from increasingly explicit Mills & Boon-type novels.

The Blue Thread imprint's first offering, *Lake of Shadows*, by Rosetta Albanese, to be published later this month, will have a "morally uplifting Catholic" ending, creating a new genre of "love stories with spirituality".

Mills & Boon-style novels known here as pink romances are hugely popular. Signora Albanese, who edits a women's Catholic magazine, was "aware that our readers do not exactly disdain romantic novels". She wanted to "exploit the same narrative

mechanisms to convey a different message". There was no lack of good religious writers. Signora Albanese told the Catholic daily *Avenire*, but they tended to focus on "higher literature".

"We are aiming at a more popular product, taking account of the need for consolation which drives our readers to buy romantic fiction," she said. "We do not want to teach women as much as to offer them models of behaviour which are not negative."

In *Lake of Shadows*, a woman discovers the man she loves has left his wife, unable to cope with her sudden blindness. Of course, she will end the affair, but should she try to save his marriage?

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Surviving children offer to supply blood samples 'to clear last lingering doubts'

DNA test on skull may hold answer to Bormann riddle

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

THE mysterious fate of Martin Bormann, Hitler's right-hand man in the Berlin bunker, may finally be resolved after a decision by German authorities to carry out genetic tests on a skull that has been under lock and key for 25 years.

A few of Bormann's surviving children have agreed to give blood samples and other physical assistance to determine the authenticity of the skull. One son, 57-year-old Martin Bormann Jr, said: 'It was important for the family to lay his father's bones to rest and put an end to five decades of speculation about the man who broke out of Hitler's bunker in the final hours of the Third Reich.'

'We can only bury him after the last lingering doubts have been cleared up,' he said.

The hunt for Martin Bormann has occupied Nazi-hunters and Fleet Street newspapers ever since it was clear that he had disappeared in the smoke and rubble of Berlin in May 1945. As Hitler's personal assistant he profited from the growing isolation of the Nazi leader, taking on the administration of the Chancellery and almost at times running the Reich.

Bormann was sentenced to death in absentia at Nuremberg. Forced to rely on the testimony of only a few witnesses

— of whom Arthur Axmann, the Hitler Youth leader, was the most important — Hugh Trevor-Roper, the British Military Government investigator, had to conclude there was a possibility that Bormann was still alive.

Some investigators believe, largely on the basis of flawed testimony, from SS Corporal

Some said he escaped to Brazil.
Others had him living under cover in Paraguay, Chile and Argentina.

Erich Wiedwald, that Bormann escaped to a refuge in Brazil, at the southernmost tip of its border with Paraguay. The largely uncharted area was full of heavily guarded farms sheltering former Nazis. Bormann, his face distorted by unsuccessful plastic surgery, was supposed to be in an estate known as Kolonie Waldner, 555 (555 was Bormann's SS number). Other reports had Bormann living under cover in Paraguay, Chile and Argentina.

Two exhumations, the last in 1993, turned up the wrong corpses. According to one doc-



An undated Nazi party photograph of Martin Bormann, Hitler's right-hand man, beside the skull found in Berlin in 1972 and thought to be Bormann's. Fragments of glass from a cyanide capsule were found embedded in the skull's jawbone

ument unearthed in the Paraguayan Interior Ministry, Bormann lived in the country between 1956 and 1959 when he died of stomach cancer. However, the Bormann trail does not always end in Latin America. In 1964 a former Nazi, who was active in the postwar escape organisation claimed to have taken Bormann to a monastery in northern Italy. He died, according to this report, in 1980.

Some of the reports were clearly motivated by cash. In the early 1960s, a former Nazi sold a story that he had worked together with Bormann in a travelling circus. Bormann was responsible for looking after the elephants.

German magazines, which became as obsessed by the subject as the British press, claimed even more fantastically that Winston Churchill brought Bormann to London after he had travelled down the waterways of Germany in a canoe for 12 days to surrender to the British.

The search for Bormann was so frenzied because of his undoubted closeness to Hitler who was godfather of his first child, Adolf. Since so many top Nazis escaped a final reckoning by committing suicide, postwar public opinion was adamant that at least one of the inner circle should be

brought to book. The secret of Bormann's fate, however, almost certainly lay in Berlin rather than in South America. When building workers discovered two skeletons on a bridge near the old Lehrter railway station in late 1972, the German authorities were happy to declare an end to the embarrassing chase and announce that they had found

the bodies of Bormann and one of Hitler's doctors, Ludwig Stumpfegger. Splinters of glass cyanide capsules were lodged in the jawbones of both men and dental records seem to confirm the identification. The most plausible explanation was that the two men had separated from other members of the bunker escape and had killed themselves after

realising that their position was hopeless.

The testing will be carried out by forensic scientists and geneticists under the auspices of the Federal Criminal Agency in Wiesbaden who have over the past years developed sophisticated DNA and computer reconstruction techniques. After the preliminary identification of Bormann in

1973, the German police said they would follow no further leads. But they insisted that Bormann's remains should not be cremated and the skeleton should be made available if further investigation were needed.

If the skull tests leave even a shadow of doubt, Bormann's ghost will continue to haunt newspaper columns throughout the world.



Britain to host world conference on fate of unclaimed Nazi gold

By MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BRITAIN is to host an international conference later this year on Nazi gold, Robin Cook announced yesterday. All countries laying claim to the more than five tonnes still lying in the Bank of England vaults will be invited, as well as Switzerland and other neutral countries that received the gold.

The decision is one of the first taken by the new Foreign Secretary

and is in response to an undertaking given to Greville Janner, the former Labour MP who has campaigned to have the remaining gold used to aid Holocaust victims.

Yesterday the Foreign Office also published a second historical note on the results of intensive investigations into files and records that have been spurred by the international furor over dealings by neutral countries, particularly Switzerland, in Nazi gold during the Second World War. The note shows

that some gold taken directly from Jewish victims, either jewellers, coins and ornaments or ripped from the mouths of those murdered in concentration camps, almost certainly was melted down and included in the bars of 'monetary gold' traded by Germany.

Mr Cook said yesterday that there had rightly been deep international concern about the fate of the gold looted by the Nazis. 'One of the responsibilities of those living now is to ensure that the truth is

known about that dark period in Europe's past,' he said.

More than 98 per cent of all the gold found in Germany after the war or paid back by the Swiss has already been distributed to claimant governments. But last year the Government halted the distribution of the remainder because of growing pressure to give it directly to victims or their families. Mr Cook said he hoped the Tripartite Gold Commission — set up by Britain, France and America after the war

would be able to complete its work as soon as possible.

The last historical research shows that the Allies suspected that Germany's monetary reserve included gold seized from Jews but decided, nevertheless, to classify all gold that was remelted into bars as monetary gold that would not be repaid directly to victims.

The London conference will look at the historical responsibility of those handling the Nazi gold, and examine the Allies' record in dealing

with the matter. Mr Cook said the fact that 'tainted' gold had found its way into the pool strengthens the case for looking imaginatively for ways of compensating the victims or their direct descendants'.

The Swiss Government, which last year announced a special fund to compensate Holocaust victims, has agreed to attend and welcome Mr Cook's announcement.

Leading article, page 19

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debonair

Clinton delivers tough message to Mexico on drugs

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN MEXICO CITY

PRESIDENT Clinton called yesterday for a new era of close co-operation between Mexico and the United States, while delivering a tough message behind the scenes that Mexico should combat urgently corruption and drug trafficking if it wanted American support.

The first US President to visit Mexico for nearly 20 years, Mr Clinton said that "powerful currents of commerce and culture pull us together". In Mexico City's *Campo Marte* parade ground, standing with his wife, Hillary, in front of massed military for a 21-gun salute, Mr Clinton added that the US needed to work urgently with its southern "amigos" to meet "common challenges".

Madeleine Albright, the Secretary of State, Janet Reno, the Attorney-General, and General Barry McCaffrey, the drug "czar", also gathered in Mexico City yesterday for parallel talks with their counterparts, such as the seriousness with which America views the drugs, immigration and environmental problems along the 2,000-mile shared border.

Mr Clinton's plea for co-

operation comes after months of sharply deteriorating relations between the two countries. The arrest in February of Mexico's top counter-narcotics official for alleged links to drug cartels provoked many in Congress to try to block the annual "recertification" of Mexico as an ally in the drugs war. The Mexican Government was then infuriated last month by tough new American rules to expel illegal immigrants — at least three million Mexicans have crossed the border illegally — as well as by videos showing US border guards treating Mexicans roughly.

Mr Clinton said yesterday that he had backed Mexico repeatedly against its critics in Congress, pushing through the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta) in 1993 and organising an emergency \$13 billion (22 billion) loan during the peso crisis two years later. He backs the continuation and extension of Nafta, up for debate in Congress this summer.

The strong message he was also believed to have delivered yesterday in an hour of private talks with President Zedillo was that, unless the US

Zeidillo was that, unless the US

drugs, corruption, money-laundering, illegal arms trafficking and organised crime".

State Department officials say that America will provide \$6 million towards Mexico's anti-drug efforts, in particular for training replacements for

1,200 allegedly corrupt officers who have been dismissed.

The commission also announced that the US and Mexico will share the \$250 million cost of sewage plants at the border, rapidly becoming one of the most polluted zones of

either country. Rapid progress on those issues is the minimum Mr Clinton needs to set to be one of this summer's toughest battles between the White House and Congress.

Visit to tomb: During his

A drill sergeant at the heart of the US Army's growing sex scandal was jailed for 25 years yesterday for raping six recruits (Ian Brodie writes).

Delmar Simpson, 32, faced a maximum life sentence for 18 counts of rape and other sex offences at Aberdeen training camp, north of Washington. He was demoted to private, forfeited pay and was dishonorably discharged.

The prosecution had urged the six jurors to impose the maximum sentence as a message to all drill sergeants that sexual misconduct would not be tolerated.

Babies preserved

Cluj: The bodies of 47 babies have been found in a hospital tank of formaldehyde. Under Romanian law parental consent must be given for hospitals to bury children, but many were abandoned. (AFP)

Bomb kills four

Algiers: A car bomb exploded near two schools in an Algiers suburb, killing a child and three adolescents and wounding 25 other people, officials said. There was no immediate claim of responsibility. (AP)

High earners

Lisbon: Police in northern Portugal have arrested 11 officials of a building company which paid its workers by giving them three daily doses of heroin and cocaine, newspaper reports said. (AFP)

Spain lashed

Barcelona: High winds swept across Spain, stranding hundreds of fishing boats in ports and causing part of a building's facade to collapse in Barcelona, killing a woman pedestrian. (AP)

Grenade tragedy

Tirana: Three people were killed and ten wounded when a drunken man carrying a grenade tripped as he got on to a bus in a central Albanian town, causing an explosion. The drunk died. (Reuters)

Heston's role

Los Angeles: Charlton Heston, the actor, was elected vice-president of the National Rifle Association at its annual conference to help lead America's beleaguered gun lobbyists back to national prominence.

Fowl weather

Beijing: A tornado which swept through eastern China killed 100,000 ducks and chickens, injured more than 30 people and damaged 23,000 acres of farmland, state radio reported. (AFP)



President Zedillo greets President Clinton and his wife in Mexico City before talks between the two leaders

Sister says McVeigh railed against 'fascist tyrants' after Waco siege

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON



Jennifer McVeigh court sketch of her yesterday

TIMOTHY McVEIGH's sister turned on him yesterday, testifying that the chief suspect in the Oklahoma City bombing told her "something big" was about to happen, only weeks before the blast that killed 168 adults and children.

Jennifer McVeigh, 23, giving evidence in Denver under交叉ly from prosecution, said that she had received a letter from her brother that appeared to signal the impending explosion and advised her to prolong a planned Florida spring holiday.

His sister is considered to be a linchpin for the prosecution case in determining more than

merely physical evidence against Mr McVeigh. Criticism of the FBI forensic science laboratory in Washington has already undermined parts of the prosecution case, but Ms McVeigh, the alleged bomber's closest relative, yesterday provided the strongest motive for his actions.

She explained his anger over the federal siege at Waco, Texas, which had led to the deaths of 80 members of the Branch Davidian cult exactly two years before the conflagration in Oklahoma.

Mr McVeigh, his sister said, had railed against federal agents as "fascist tyrants" and "power-hungry storm troopers". During one visit in late 1994, he showed her a videotape of the Waco raid and told her he no longer felt that handing out anti-government literature was enough to temper the encroaching power of government. "He was not in the propaganda stage," Ms McVeigh, a student described her brother as saying. "He was now in the action stage."

the police where they live. The prosecutor told the jury how Jesse Timmendecus, who lived opposite the Kankas in Hamilton Township, New Jersey, and whose criminal past was known to no one in the neighbourhood — hired Megan to his home in July 1994, offering to show her a puppy.

Mr Timmendecus — who faces the death penalty if

convicted — allegedly punched, strangled and raped the seven-year-old, before wrapping her body in a series of plastic bags and discarding it in a public park outside town.

The trial, which is continuing, is expected to end all vestiges of opposition to "Megan's law", which some civil liberties groups have criticised as unconstitutional.

Convicted offender 'raped girl, 7'

New York: The trial in New Jersey of a twice-convicted sex offender, accused of raping and murdering a seven-year-old girl, began yesterday (Tunku Varadarajan writes).

The murdered girl, Megan Kanka, has lent her name posthumously to legislation enacted in every American state. Known as "Megan's law", it requires convicted paedophiles to register with

the police where they live. The prosecutor told the jury how Jesse Timmendecus, who lived opposite the Kankas in Hamilton Township, New Jersey, and whose criminal past was known to no one in the neighbourhood — hired Megan to his home in July 1994, offering to show her a puppy.

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Beetles fly to rescue of Everglades

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

SQUADRONS of stout beetles have been airlifted to the Everglades, America's largest swamp, in a desperate attempt to stop the Australian melaleuca tree from wiping out hundreds of species of local plants and insects.

The tree, whose sponge-like qualities were once believed to be good for swamplands, was introduced into the Everglades at the turn of the century by well-meaning farmers. But its unopposed proliferation has seriously disturbed the ecological balance of the area.

The melaleuca has colonised nearly 20 per cent of the 7.5 million-acre swamp-land. Government botanists fear that more than half of the Everglades could turn into a melaleuca forest within 50 years. The stout beetles, which kill off the trees and are also of Australian provenance, are seen as a last resort.

The jury heeded Reynolds's argument against sending a message that it was all right for smokers to carry on smoking because their families would collect money in the end. Lawyers for the Connor family argued in vain that Reynolds should be held accountable for knowingly selling a lethal product that was the equivalent of "candy with razor blades inside".

The six jurors, including three former smokers and an

occasional smoker, found Reynolds cigarettes were not "unreasonably dangerous and defective" and the firm was not negligent for making them.

The tobacco industry has won in at least 19 similar civil liability cases without paying a cent in damages. There is an appeal outstanding over one award of \$750,000 (£460,000) where the late smoker had tried in vain to break the habit.

Although the Connor verdict was a victory for the embattled tobacco firms, they have been losing the war and suffered a serious setback two weeks ago when a judge ruled that the Government could regulate cigarettes as a drug.

The firms resumed talks in Dallas yesterday in the hope of reaching a settlement with anti-smoking forces. As envisaged, the deal would limit the firms' liability in exchange for a wide range of concessions, including government regulation, agreement to pay for anti-smoking campaigns, elimination of cigarette vending machines and an end to sponsorship of sports events.

Tobacco firm wins but talks continue

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

AN American jury has again

decreed that cigarette makers owe nothing to the families of lifelong smokers who die of lung cancer. But the verdict will not stop the secret negotiations under way between the tobacco industry and a powerful coalition of anti-smoking forces.

Jurors in Jacksonville, Florida, refused to hold RJ Reynolds Tobacco, maker of Winston and Salem cigarettes, responsible for the death of Jean Connor. She was a bank supervisor who started smoking at 15, developed a three-packets-a-day habit and died of lung cancer at 49.

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Shape up for the summer

ARE you an hourglass, a spoon, a cone or a cube? Do you have sparrow's thighs, but the shoulders of an all-in wrestler? A wasp waist, but a pear-shaped bottom? Everyone puts on weight in the places where nature decrees — something not taken into account by most diets. But as a nation whose twin preoccupations are food and chic, the French have the answer. For each shape, goes the latest thinking from across the Channel, a different strategy ...

Surviving the slimming season

THE HOURGLASS

Hourglasses have all the luck: wasp waist, curvy hips and a bosom that doesn't disappear when they start to lose weight — like Anita Ekberg in *La Dolce Vita*. In short, it is the figure we would all like to have. So what are the problems? A tummy that tends to flab; upper arms and thighs prone to thickening, especially in winter — and a disinclination to take exercise.

SHAPING UP
You don't need to take radical measures. The goal is to keep in shape and avoid binges. Get into the habit of drinking mineral water — a litre a day. If you don't like the idea of taking strenuous exercise, consider something that is sociable and fun — aerobics classes, or better still, dance.

To lose a couple of kilos quickly, try a weekend detox diet (always consult your doctor before embarking on a diet).

THE WEEKEND DIET
On waking, drink half a litre of still mineral water. Breakfast: A bowl of skimmed milk with honey and a teaspoon of unsweetened drinking chocolate. Elevenses: An orange or grapefruit. One litre of water. Lunch: Fish steamed with herbs and olive oil, or grilled white meat or grilled red meat, served with green vegetables. Two hours later, plain yoghurt with a teaspoon of honey. Tea: The juice of one lemon with water and a teaspoon of honey.

Supper: Three bowls of vegetable bouillon, then three small servings of cooked vegetables. Allow ten to 20 minutes between each serving. Bedtime: Yoghurt with a teaspoon of honey.

THE SPOON
Spoon-shaped women are basically slim, with narrow shoulders and a flat stomach. Genetically programmed to put on weight around the hips, thighs and legs, as spoons (or pears) get older they become prone to saddlebag thighs, fatty knees and cellulite.

SHAPING UP
Because they are slim, spoons can develop an obsession with putting on

weight and have a tendency to under-eat. They are hypermotivated when slimming and throw themselves into diets, ignoring the nutritional dangers, then give in and buy a chocolate bar. To break the cycle of undernourishment and abandonment diets, spoons must be tolerant of their eating habits and learn to stabilise their weight.

THE DIET
End the hunger strike. Do not skip breakfast and lunch. Drastic diets

make the spoon look unattractively gaunt and flat-chested. Concentrate your calorie intake on the early part of the day (25 per cent at breakfast, a decent lunch, a light supper). Eat plenty of fibre and drink lots of water. You will be eating more — but better. Breakfast: An unsweetened drink. Two slices of wholemeal bread with a scrape of butter, or a bowl of high-fibre cereal with semi-skimmed milk. Fresh fruit. One plain yoghurt, unsweetened or a serving of low-fat fromage frais.

Elevenses: An apple or two fibre-rich crispbreads. Lunch: Grilled turkey, veal or chicken breast; or a portion of steamed fish. Vegetables or pulses with a slice of bread, pasta or rice. Alternatively, a salad of raw vegetables, egg or ham. Tea: Fresh yoghurt. Dinner: Vegetable soup. Grilled fish, or two eggs, cooked any way, or two slices of ham with all fat removed. A large plate of green vegetables. Yoghurt or fruit. No bread, pasta, or rice.

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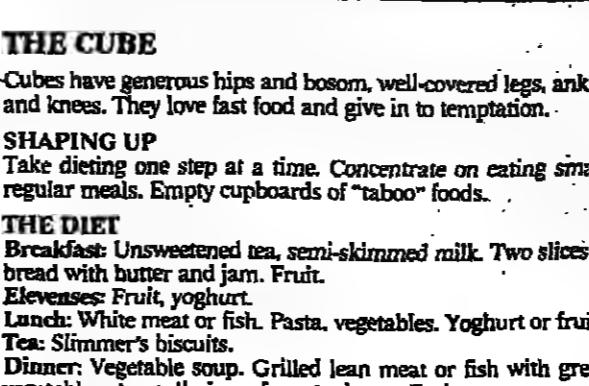
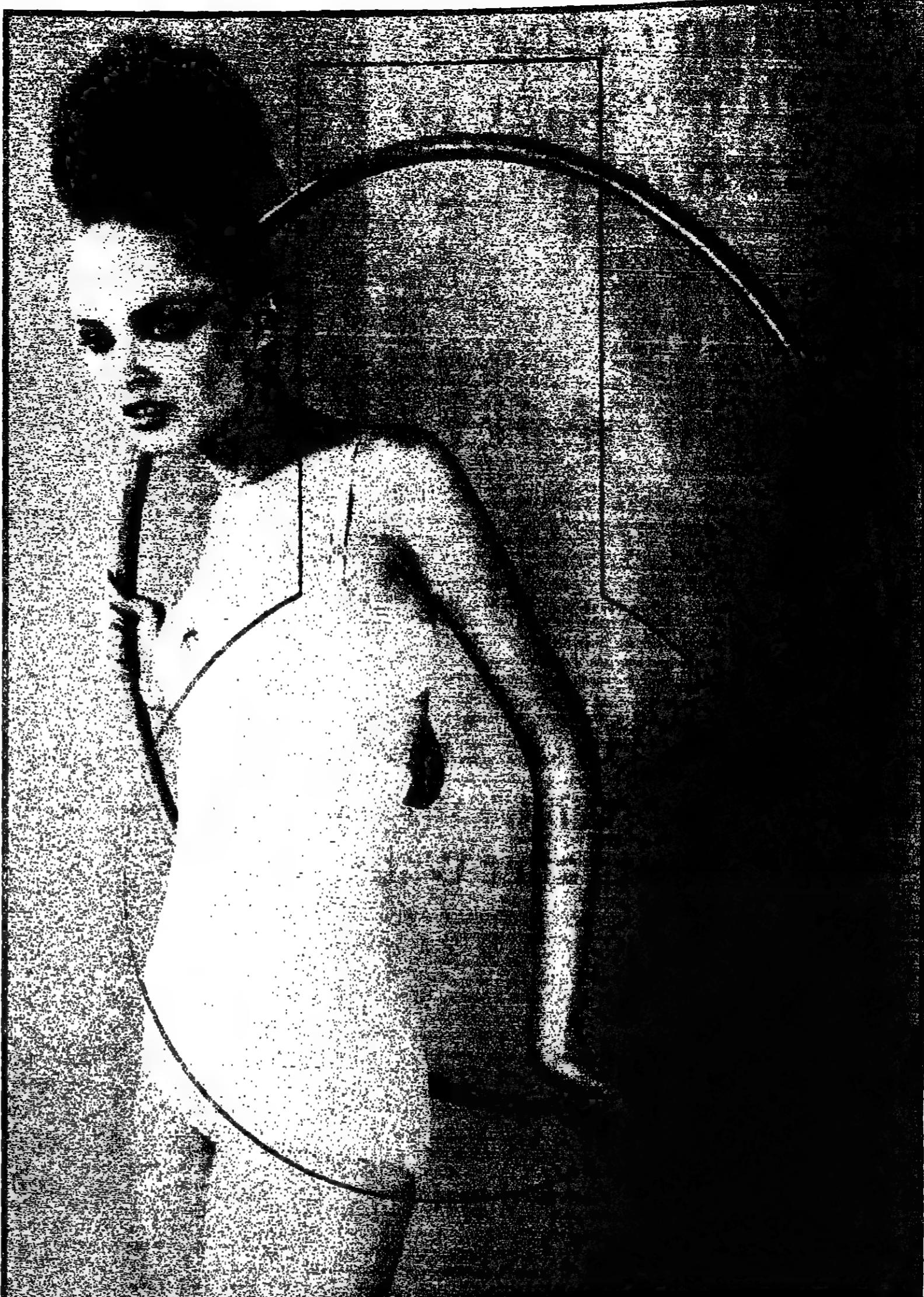
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Shirley Williams held her knife and fork in her fists'



Terence Conran is a man of achievement but no intellectual. I suppose I make him feel inferior'



'Mrs Thatcher's decor was suburban hairdresser'

February 9, 1974
My first three weeks as Director of the V&A have been hell. The dreary, Civil Service-ness of it all, the terrible forms, files, the smell of Jeyes Fluid, the dirty loos – all the things I can't stand, but I will change it, and I am. I want to get the 20th century into that place and make it alive and a comment on our times.

September 20, 1975
It has been a very tough 18 months. Of all the battles those with the unions have been most unbelievable. Their great objective is to achieve a union closed shop. Above all there must be no changes.

October 8
There are intrigues going on for the replacement of Hugh Jenkins [Minister for the Arts], thank God. The man is an idiot, dangerous and dim.

1976
If I had to choose one year in my life which I would never wish to relive, this would be it. It began when I was summoned, together with Margaret Weston, Director of the Science Museum, to the DES. The meeting was confidential. No one was to be told what happened there, which was a request that we were to do an exercise as to how we would cut our staff by up to 25 per cent. I came back to the V&A with my world shattered. On November 2 the entire staff of the Museum was gathered into the Raphael Cartoon

Court. I then read out what was to happen, my voice choked with emotion and the tears welling. I walked away alone, broken and defeated. All one was left with was the will to fight.

April 7
I went to the Minister of Education's office for the presentation of a medal. The Minister, Fred Mulla, is a north-country slob, coarse of feature, not very bright but affectionate and good in his handling of the occasion. The office was still largely with Mrs Thatcher's decor, suburban hairdresser-style. The Permanent Secretary, Sir William Pyle, was very funny about her. His most revealing moment with her, he said, was when [during the Jellicoe affair] she had steered herself up the back of a car with him to ask: 'Did men really pay that kind of money for that sort of thing?' She lives in a world apart, unaware of how most of the population lived.

October 5
Now the Government cuts for the V&A have really started to bite with a savagery. As Director I face the worst crisis since 1939.



THE ROY STRONG DIARIES

Day Three of our series: conflict with the unions, intrigue among the Trustees

Everything here in Britain is so gloomy. The main theme is can we or can we not survive until the 1980s without a collapse of society as we know it. One is confused, bewildered, despairing.

November 15
We went to the Royal Box at Covent Garden as guests of John and Anya Sainsbury with Shirley Williams (the new Secretary of State for Education) and Professor Anthony King as the other guests. Mrs Williams strikes one as oddly short, but that is because she seems to have no neck. She moves awkwardly and I noticed that she held her cutlery in her fist and gesticulated with her knife and fork as she spoke.

Anthony King, with whom she lives, is an overweight provincial academic from the University of Essex. She clearly needs him as a prop, whereas Mrs Thatcher could manage without Denis.

May 28
It was rather a piano Royal Academy Dinner. The food was filthy and the speeches very dull. I seized my chance to tell the Prime Minister that the poor V&A mustn't be sacrificed yet again because of Civil Service cuts. She said on, saying that she had given the Arts masses of money. During her after-dinner speech extolling her munificence in terms of cash to the Arts, she interjected: 'In spite of what Dr Roy Strong says.' I wanted to sink through the floor but afterwards she came up to me and rather sweetly put her arm through mine and said: 'What is the problem?' That I thought rather marvellous and I told her exactly what our problem was.

March 1981
The fall of Norman St John-Stevens was very sudden. I had guessed ages before that his successor would be Paul Channon and I was right and it was a great relief. Norman had done well by the Arts but he was temperamental, unpredictable, and capricious.

April 1
At Clarence House, I swooped on Mrs Thatcher, saying how pleased we

were with Paul Channon. She looked amazingly fresh considering the banting she'd undergone. Yes, she was pleased with Paul too. Yes, Norman was too much. Look at the way he'd done his office up, she exclaimed. No sense of economy. Not a penny had been spent on 10 Downing Street.

We went to lunch, where Reta Casson explained to me how bitter Norman had felt at the next morning.

TOMORROW
'I have never felt anger, rage and resentment so deeply as I did in my early teens'
Sir Roy Strong on his father

April 24, 1985
This is an odd, interim year. We are progressively involved in deadlock with the Trustees. On April 22 the Trustees had a meeting at Apsley House when [Terence] Conran from the outer seemed never to listen and, I noticed, yawned and leaned backwards.

Over lunch Conran behaved like a *sous-chef* triumphant: I put before them again the superb bust by Roubille of Lord Chesterfield. 'What do we want work by that foreigner for? I know someone who can make a copy of that, so that you'd not notice the difference. Why can't we share it with the National Portrait Gallery and shunt it to and fro?' Thus Terence Conran. This is a man of achievement: yes he's no intellectual and I suppose I make him feel inferior and so as usual he bullies his way through.

June 13
Trustees' meetings have developed

into very unpleasant affairs. They have proved a real collection of weathercocks. Carrington was completely flattened by Grey Gowrie, who told him that Geny had given the National Gallery £50 million. In the taxi back from White's, he said he had been a failure. He has. So have all the Trustees.

June 2, 1986
I found myself at the Princess of Wales's table, too distant to speak. It was interesting to study the Princess. The freshness and bloom had gone. Now she was thinner and sharper of feature with a hard jutting chinline and hair lacquered to the point of snapping. She doesn't hold herself well and her dress was rather sleazy with huge puff sleeves. When the dancing began we had all the Trustees.

November 4
On the whole the media have gone along with our policy of voluntary admission charges. On the day it began there was the usual rent-a-picket from the left wing, the 'stars' (including the playwright Col in Weland) were photographed by the media and went. It all blew over by midday.

November 11
A long talk with Mary Giles on Sunday. Yes, there had been a strong move to get rid of me by a group of Trustees earlier this year. Gowrie too. I was told, wished this to happen. 'He was no friend to you,' Mary said.

May 28, 1986
Soon after I announced my resignation from the V&A we bumped into Peter Hall, Maria Ewing and child. 'We're leftovers from the Sixties,' Peter ragged, I said, 'Speak for yourself.' Peter then said that he had been working on his exit for four years. I said that I had for three.

Extracted from *The Roy Strong Diaries 1967-1987*, by Roy Strong, to be published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson on May 12, £20. © 1987 Roy Strong

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Fig. 11. The water-lily fold for table napkins.

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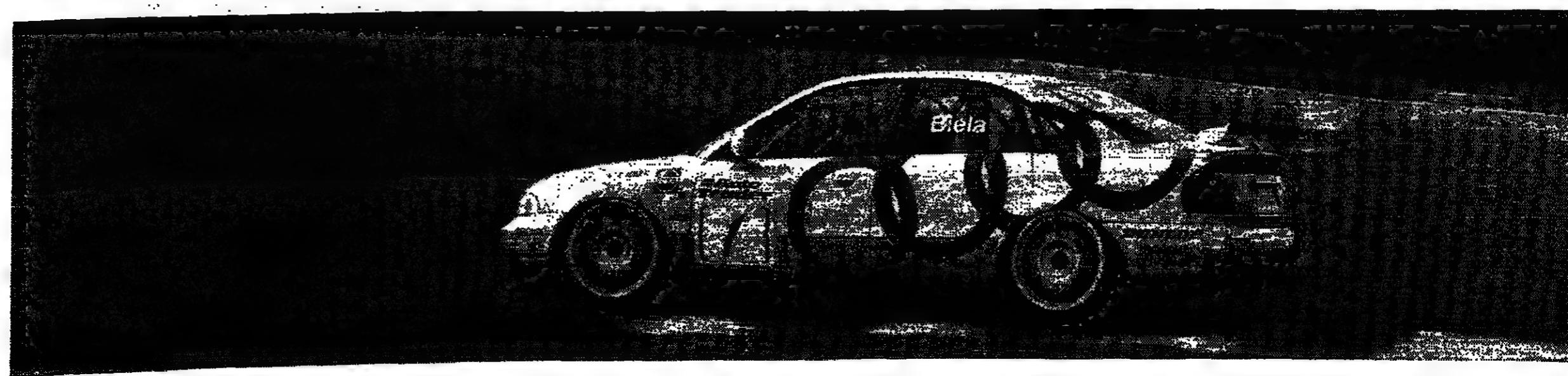
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February 14, 1980
Having lived through four changes of Minister for the Arts since 1974, one gets used to them coming and going. I was not heartbroken to see Jack Donaldson make an exit.

TOMORROW
'I have never felt anger, rage and resentment so deeply as I did in my early teens'

Sir Roy Strong on his father



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A steel cage for the Iron Chancellor

Brown is throwing away the key to policy, says Anatole Kaletsky

Philip Snowden, Stafford Cripps, James Callaghan, John Smith and now Gordon Brown. Nearly every Labour Chancellor (and Shadow Chancellor) has started off by trying to insure his party against the innate hostility of financial markets by locking the pound in a golden casket and throwing away the key. All of Mr Brown's predecessors lived to regret their servitude to whatever happened to be the City's opinion at the time — on the gold standard in the 1920s and 1930s, on the post-war parity against the dollar in the 1940s, on devaluation in the 1960s, on the exchange-rate mechanism in the 1980s, and today on the need for an independent central bank.

In this sense, Mr Brown's surprise announcement yesterday should hardly have been surprising. Why, then, did it surprise even the Governor of the Bank of England himself?

Partly, of course, because everyone, maybe even the Governor, assumed that a change of such far-reaching importance would either have been announced in Labour's manifesto or would have been preceded by lengthy consultations. Green Papers, parliamentary debates and so on. After all, Tony Blair himself said yesterday that this was "the biggest step" in economic policy-making in Britain since "World War Two". One wonders how many more decisions of such importance have been kept back from the manifesto to be rushed out at hurriedly assembled press conferences during a parliamentary recess. If this is what happens when a fresh-faced idealistic Government is still in the first flush of its naïve commitment to transparency, accountability and open democratic debate, how will these people behave after they have tasted power for more than five days?

But leaving aside the constitutional nicety that nobody has voted for this reform, what is wrong with making the Bank independent?

The two economic principles behind central bank independence are that inflation is always and everywhere a monetary phenomenon, and that there is never a political choice to be made between curbing inflation and encouraging economic growth. Most economists believe them and therefore support independent central banks. Unfortunately, like many of the things believed through the ages by most economists, both of these statements are manifestly false. This is why central bank independence is rarely sufficient to curb inflation and is often the cause of prolonged recessions — as in Germany over the past three years.

The countries that have made a success of central bank independence have done so by gradually moving away from the monetarist view that monetary policy should concern itself solely with controlling inflation. In America, the Fed is explicitly charged with achieving the highest possible rate of growth and employment consistent with money-

tary stability. This is a far cry from the virtually exclusive preoccupation with prices in Germany and at the new Bank of England.

Even in America, however, independence brings a serious problem. Once they abandon crude monetarism, the authorities can use two main tools for managing the economy: interest rates, and the fiscal balance between taxes and public spending. These tools must be used in close co-ordination. But if the central bank is independent, there can be no guarantee that changes in fiscal policy (for example, an increase in taxes) will be balanced by corresponding monetary moves. Because the government can never be sure that the bank will reward a tougher fiscal policy with lower interest rates, unpleasant fiscal decisions tend to be put off until they are forced by a crisis. Central banks, on the other hand, keep interest rates up for months or years ahead of tough budgets because they do not trust governments to raise tax. Anyone who thinks that a damaging policy stands off between a government and an independent central bank is just a theoretical curiosity.

Control by the Bank recalls our entry into the ERM

should recall the budgetary paralysis in America in the 1980s or the stalemate over fiscal and monetary policy in Germany these past three years.

Now consider the present economic situation in Britain. The economy needs a tighter fiscal policy, accompanied by a lower interest rate and a lower exchange rate. To achieve this rebalancing, interest rates and tax policy have to be moved at the same time. But can the Bank now be relied on to deliver the monetary easing that should go with higher taxes? And will British industry, which is suffering grievously from the overvalued pound, support the Chancellor's plan to deflate the economy by raising taxes, if he cannot guarantee a payoff in lower interest rates and a more competitive pound?

As it happens, Mr Brown will probably get away with it this time. Eddie George is eager for reappointment and is likely to oblige with lower interest rates and a helpful attitude to the pound. He made a point of stating yesterday that "the pound is uncomfortably strong and is not likely to be sustained at this level into the medium term". But will he be so obliging once he is reappointed for a further five years? And what will happen when the Bank and the Government start to disagree about where the economy should be going?

Freedom of the Bank of England may seem like a clever wheeze in the short term, winning financial Brownie points. But sooner or later economic conditions will turn more hostile. Only then will the new arrangements be tested — perhaps to destruction. The more Mr Brown's sudden announcement reminds me of John Major's equally unexpected and "irreversible" decision to join the exchange-rate mechanism.

And he's off

HEARTENING news comes from the Foreign Office, where Robin Cook has been quick to make his mark. The Foreign Secretary, a man of the turf to the tips of his brogues, broke off his first briefing by officials on European policy to watch the races.

Just 24 hours after his appointment, Cook adjourned a lengthy meeting on the forthcoming inter-governmental conference, picked

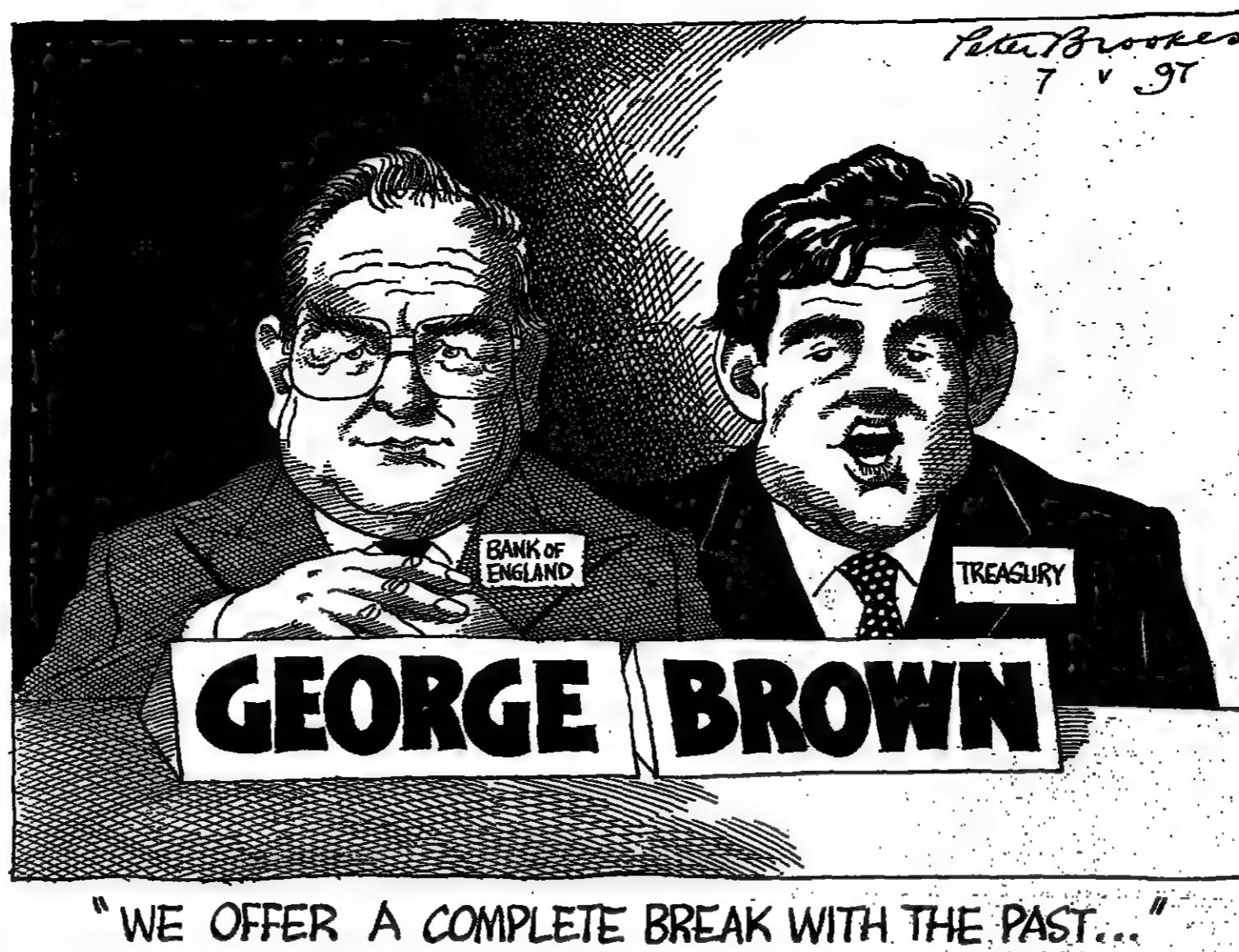
up his form book and turned to the for the Pertemps Two Thousand Guineas at Newmarket.

The meeting had lasted for two hours, "Cook says, "and I knew it would run and run so at 3pm I politely asked the parliamentary under-secretary and his colleagues to leave the room for half an hour so that I could enjoy the big race on television."

At the Foreign Office yesterday, staff were mugging up on the horses so as to be able to suck up to their new boss, whose selection for the race, Revocive, narrowly failed to land a double.

Cook plans to continue as racing tipster for *The Herald* in Glasgow, to which he was filing copy within two hours of being appointed Foreign Secretary. On arriving the next morning at the Foreign Office, he ordered his secretary to cancel some tabloids and order *The Sporting Life*.

• Home Office staff should never go hungry. Jack Straw, the new minister, has announced through the Central Office of Information that one of his recreations is



Blair's major-generals

The Cromwellian temptation is hard for Labour's Roundheads to resist

I am a sucker for new dawns. The rose bursts early from its bud. Happy children skip across village greens. Cats stretch in the sun. Old women clutch their pension books and murmur, "God bless you, Tony". Every little breeze seems to whisper "Cherie".

That was on Saturday. On Sunday the cold front swept in from North Uist and winter returned. I was driving through the Pennines and sleet bucketed from leaden clouds. New Labour, new weather, someone said in a pub. The radio began pouring out a stream of bulletins from London.

The news was that Roundheads had arrived in Downing Street. Horses were neighing in the courtyard. Spurs clanked into the Cabinet Office. Ironside fists swept papers from desks and helmets crashed onto tottering hat-stands. God's Englishman had won the war and would now order the peace, his major-generals in attendance.

Every new ruler is dazzled by the perks of office, yet equally convinced of its unprecedented importance. Tony Blair finds himself head of the most dominant executive in the Western world. He need fear no constitutional check on his powers, no balancing legislature or supreme court. Like Cromwell, he can disregard the monarchy, abolish the Lords and treat Parliament as a cypher. Despite a minority popular mandate, he enjoys the public's goodwill. He can play the game of power any way he likes.

He clearly means to play it strong. Ben Pimlott records in his biography of Harold Wilson that 1964 saw a horde of political appointees sweep into Downing Street, ostensibly to stop the Civil Service impeding Labour's "New Britain", an opaque concept then as now. The team moved in every attic and cupboard. Maria Williams, George Wigg, Tommy Balogh, Trevor Lloyd-Hughes, John Allen, Gerald Kaufman, pitched camp in Marcia's eyrie and declared war on two foes, the Civil Service and ministers outside the loop. The cabal was intensely unpopular.

When Margaret Thatcher came to power, her most memorable statement on Whitehall reform was that she did not believe in kitchen cabinets. "My political advisers are my Cabinet," she said. This was not wholly true, but the Downing Street court was never a standing army against the party or Civil Service. Power lay with officials, such as Clive Whitmore, Charles Powell and Ber-

nard Ingham, whose loyalty was tested not on the hustings but in the more subtle battles of Whitehall.

Mr Blair is reverting to the Wilson model. He believes that John Major failed because he lacked control over his Government. Labour won a victory under a leadership utterly in command of the party as a fighting machine. Discipline was total, down to speeches, clothes, demeanour on election night, even the interpretation of history. To Mr Blair, the techniques that won the election must now be thrown at "winning" government. His commanders in the field must change their battle dress for silk stockings, but keep their guns at the ready.

Now the spin on this week's Downing Street appointments. Peter Mandelson's task in the Cabinet Office is to "create a strong centre in government so that all its various arms and departments have a very clear sense of their own direction". He is to become "pro-active on important social issues co-ordinated from the centre" and be charged with something called "strategic implementation". The press secretary, Alastair Campbell, has ordered that all ministerial interviews and statements be cleared with his office (a task at which even Lenin would have balked). Sally Morgan, the political secretary, is charged with "making sure the party marches in step with the Government".

This team is bristling with machismo. Yesterday it was announced that Cabinet Office "pro-active" committees on domestic policy, with their own secretariats and advisers, will be taking the lead in social policy reform. They, rather than the relevant spending departments, will be the engines of change under new Labour.

When I saw the word strategic in this spin, I shuddered. Mr Blair's team has been impressed by the Heseltine "morning meeting" of the past two years. But the purpose of this meeting was political and tactical. Downing Street is not a strategy department. It regards policy strategy as being for wimps, think-tanks and

the Treasury and the rest. It is between the "great fact" of the budget arithmetic and the massed pressures of voters, lobbies and spending departments, all eager to contest the fact. In Mr Blair's Government, everything will turn on this struggle. Spending plans will obsess the 300 under-employed Labour backbenchers. They will obsess the media. They will obsess a public stirred by Mr Blair to a feverish expectation of newness, change and bitterness.

These battles will have two outcomes. First the Treasury will win more often than lose, because Downing Street's concern will be increasingly with short-term politics and presentation. Second, the life of a spending minister will be wretched

Y reading of this week's appointments is that the Treasury under Gordon Brown will be tougher even than under Kenneth Clarke. If Mr Brown is to be cast as the composite Stafford Cripps and Denis Healey of new Labour, he will get his retaliation in first. He has already announced his wish to fulfil Lord Lawson's ambition and make the Treasury the supreme of domestic policy. How else can resources be properly planned?

These battles will have two outcomes. First the Treasury will win more often than lose, because Downing Street's concern will be increasingly with short-term politics and presentation. Second, the life of a spending minister will be wretched

These battles will have two outcomes. First the Treasury will win more often than lose, because Downing Street's concern will be increasingly with short-term politics and presentation. Second, the life of a spending minister will be wretched



Prince Charles: downhearted

Psychiatrists, defends his portrait, saying: "I've shown a man with intelligence who has a sad side to his life. I am not implying that the Prince of Wales lacks a sense of humour. During one session I split paint on my spectacles and he could hardly control himself."

P.H.S

The price of a Tory obsession

Sir Leon Brittan says Europe could cost two elections

We Conservatives lost the election, and lost heavily, because we allowed the campaign to obscure our compelling message on the economy and exposed our divisions over Europe instead. To go further in a Eurosceptic direction now would mean that we will lose the next election as well and risk being out of office for a generation.

Europe was never going to win us this election. Even if the persistent campaign of the Eurosceptics was as popular as they claim, the gulf between the two parties was far too wide to have been bridged by John Major coming out against the single currency. Anyway, most ministers were fighting on a strongly Eurosceptic ticket, denouncing the Labour Party as being ready to sell out to Chancellor Kohl. All Eurosceptics knew that the Tories leaned furthest in that direction. Much good it did us.

The electorate can digest only a few issues during an election campaign. Because of their obsession with the single currency, the sceptics never let the campaign sink its teeth into the greatest vote-winner of all, the strength of the economy. That was the Tories' strongest card, but it needed playing day after day. Instead the campaign kept on being diverted back to Europe. The single currency is indeed a vital issue, but the all-party commitment to a referendum should have made it irrelevant to this election.

Some of the sceptics genuinely thought they were tapping a hidden reservoir of fear among the British, who would cast their votes accordingly. They did not. For others, winning the election was never the prime object. The nation has been subjected for several months to the unedifying spectacle of would-be party leaders parading their populist distaste for Europe beneath a veneer of support for the Prime Minister. This turned the stomach of traditional Conservative voters, for whom loyalty is a key virtue. We paid dearly for it.

At the root of the Tories' difficulties has been a serious miscalculation about people's basic attitude towards Europe. That error could keep us out of power for a long time to come. The sceptics have mistaken people's nagging doubts about the aims of Europe, beneath a veneer of support for Europe, for a lack of enthusiasm for the Conservative cause. Margaret Thatcher said, we must centralise before we can decentralise.

Yet she did restore some status to the Cabinet as an institution of government. She never made it a deliberative forum — it was too leaky for that — but she did use it as a parliament of government, balancing the wings of the party, acting as lightning-conductor for trouble and as a tournament in which ministers' reputations could rise and fall. When she began to ignore her Cabinet after the 1987 victory, her slide began.

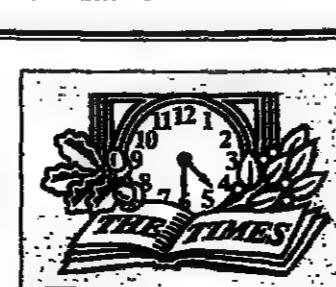
Mr Blair is approaching power with bated breath. Against all academic analysis, he seems to believe that Downing Street is not a strong institution of modern government, but a weak one. Cabinet government must be not pluralistic or open, but regimented from the centre. The centre must equally be ready for total war. This aggressive philosophy of government is bold. It defines the maxim that absolute power corrupts. It also challenges the democratic organism to develop its own antibodies. These will emerge among Labour's unwieldy backbenchers, in the press, in the opinion polls, in some massed rebellion of spending ministers. The more overbearing Mr Blair's new structure, the sooner they will emerge. To the charge of hypocrisy, new Labour already has its answer. In matters of government, there is no room for compromise.

I suppose only time will tell. One thing at least is exhilarating about new dawns. A whole new day lies ahead. That is 24 hours in which the sceptic can be proved wrong. These are one of the greatest ironies of all EU members. The country whose ideas are driving the most headway in Europe, Privatisation, deregulation, flexible labour markets, sound budgetary and fiscal policies, free trade, agricultural reform and enlargement to the east were anathema to the European Community just ten years ago. They are all now mainstream policies. Never mind whether Tony Blair has bought shares in Thatcherism. The European Union itself is becoming Conservative writ large. Even the single currency is proving a powerful incentive to bring about the structural reforms in Europe that Britain underook in the 1980s. How bizarre that the Conservative legacy is being disowned by the Conservative Party, now that it has a European label.

Europe divides both major parties. Only by drawing the party political forces out of Europe can the issues be raised that the nation informed, and the Government allowed to negotiate the best deal for Britain. John Major's promise by promising a free vote on the single currency. The idea that this should become the norm on all European issues has much to commend it.

Now is the crucial time to influence events in Europe. Britain must channel its energy into securing the enlargement of the EU. It must push for reforms that will make a wider EU more workable, while safeguarding its own prominent place in decision-making. These are major British aims for which deals must be struck and, if necessary, concessions made. We must start seeing Europe not as a federal conspiracy but as a hugely serious game of national interest that Britain can win, if it plays its cards right.

The author is Vice-President of the European Commission.



Starry-eyed

STUDIO 54, the notorious 1970s Manhattan nightclub where drugs went down like sherbet and rock stars grappled with duchesses on the floors of unisex bathrooms, is to reopen in Soho.

Ian Schrager, who owned the original Studio 54 and now runs

"cooking puddings". Satisfyingly public school puddings, too. "He likes to make meringues, treacle tarts, roly-poly, and spotted dick" explains his secretary.

Flying party

PALMA, Majorca, is a place best avoided for the next day or so. A plane-load of Referendum Party and Natural Law Party supporters are in full cry there, enjoying a beano courtesy of Thomson Holidays. Thomson advertised a free holiday and flight on a chartered plane for 280 losing election candidates and spouses on a first-come, first-served basis. The flighty RP crowd, along with fanatical yogis, were first off the mark for the four-day junket, which finishes on

"Could you ask the Minister of Sport to close his door?"

some wincingly modern hotels in New York, says in *Harper's Queen* that he wants to open a new version in Soho.

In its heyday, the studio attracted the likes of Andy Warhol, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Mick Jagger, Truman Capote and Liza Minelli. Its centrepiece was a neon moon guzzling cocaine from a moving spoon. Not quite the place for beers with Chris Evans, Gazzza and Danny Baker.

• No danger of flamboyance with Alistair Darling, who as the new Chief Secretary to the Treasury will be the Government's top financial screw. Yesterday lunchtime he was seen in the freshly done-up Strangers' cafeteria in the Commons, where he bought a cup of tea and moved to a table, only to dig out a packet of home-made sandwiches.

Bleak picture

GLOOM ALL ROUND as the latest official portrait of the Prince of Wales is unveiled today. In the portrait by Michael Noakes, the Prince is standing at the door of his Highgrove drawing-room looking glum. Noakes, who was commissioned by the Royal College of



Cook: dead cert



CREDIBILITY IN THE BANK

Now Labour can resist the lure of the single currency

Gordon Brown, the new Chancellor, has hit the ground not so much running as sprinting. On the second business day since Labour formed the Government, he announced the biggest change in economic policy since the pound joined the exchange rate mechanism. His plan to give the Bank of England the power to set interest rates came in a dawn raid that left heads spinning in the City, Fleet Street and Westminster.

Labour had hinted at reforming the Bank in its manifesto. But nowhere did the party propose to make it almost wholly independent from the Government. Indeed, Mr Brown often said that any decision on independence would have to follow an assessment of the Bank's long-term track record in giving policy advice. This assessment now seems to have been made in Opposition with a view to instant independence in Government. But that was never made clear.

It is easy, however, to see why the option is attractive to a Labour Chancellor and might be attractive to a country facing a term (or maybe two) of the party in power. Every Labour Government has been the victim of a sterling crisis. Just as Britain's departure from the ERM in 1992 marked the beginning of the end for the Major administration, so did the devaluations of 1931, 1949, 1967 and 1976 toll the dead bell for those Labour Governments. Taking monetary policy out of the hands of the Chancellor and giving it to the Bank of England makes such disasters less likely.

The new arrangement should lead to more stable monetary policy. It will improve the Government's credibility in the markets — as evidenced by yesterday's rise in gilt prices. That should help to bring interest rates generally lower. But it will also help Mr Brown's credibility with his own party. If his MPs clamour for higher spending he will be able to explain that the Bank will simply raise interest rates to punitive levels if he runs a loose fiscal policy.

But there are dangers too. An independent Bank will be tasked to put low inflation

above other priorities. This is fine when the economy is growing. But what would the Bank have done in September 1992, when the recession-hit country desperately needed lower interest rates in order to recover? Inflation was then at 3.6 per cent, more than a point above the Bank's current target. Would it have had the imagination to cut rates regardless?

An even bigger danger looms. This step could be seen as the precursor to Britain joining the single currency. Mr Brown was at pains to point out yesterday that it was "highly unlikely" he would join in 1999. But making the Bank of England independent is a step that would have to be taken first.

This form of independence does not in itself, however, chime with European demands. The Bank of England will not set its own inflation target; that will be decided by the Government. And the Chancellor will both appoint his own people to the monetary committee determining interest rates and send a representative from the Treasury to sit in on the meetings. To make the Bank conform with the Maastricht criteria would require extra legislation.

Indeed, it could be argued that an independent Bank of England makes British membership of a single currency less likely. Some of Labour's enthusiasm for EMU rests on the very desire to hand over responsibility for the currency to a more disciplined outside force; that has already been achieved by yesterday's move. If a Labour Chancellor does not trust himself — or does not expect the markets to trust him — to run the economy prudently, he is right to look for a prop. An independent Bank of England is a far superior prop than EMU would be.

The interest rate for a single currency will be set with regard to the average performance of its members' economies. As we saw in the ERM, these rates could be wholly inappropriate for an individual country in the system. At least the Bank of England will be looking at the British economy alone when it sets interest rates. Mr Brown has gone this far; he need go no further.

THE GOLD CONFERENCE

An early sign of Labour's foreign policy approach

At first glance it might seem odd that, with such a crowded foreign policy agenda, one of the first decisions taken by Robin Cook deals with an issue already more than 50 years old. Yet his announcement yesterday that Britain is to host an international conference later this year on Nazi gold may be more than just the swift implementation of a pre-election promise to Greville Janner, a former Labour MP. Mr Cook wants also to signal that moral considerations will be further to the front of British foreign policy.

The conference will be part historical, part policy-making. The aim is to bring together all the experts and historians who have uncovered the uncomfortable facts that wartime allies and neutrals have tried to suppress. It will also bring together the Swiss Government and Jewish groups, the two sides whose initial antagonism was making Nazi gold a new source of bitterness and recriminations. Switzerland has now set in train a thorough examination of its bank records and has promised a substantial sum in payment to organisations helping the victims of the Holocaust. Jewish groups, in turn, have abated their calls for a boycott of Swiss banks.

The conference, however, need not focus on blame or guilt. No one is now alive who took the original decisions that now appear so callous and so uninformed by moral sensibility. Questions of later cover-ups by banks and European foreign ministry officials will, however, need to be examined. The Foreign Office yesterday produced a second volume of historical notes on the gold issue. It is a succinct and well-rounded account which gives stark evidence of the

compromises, confusion and bureaucratic insensitivity that characterised the allied gold dealings after the war.

Representatives of the Allies well knew that the bars of gold found in Germany probably contained metal wracked from the teeth of concentration camp victims. They admitted that this was a "problem", in the callous parlance of the time. Yet they decided that for ease of accounting they would classify all tainted bars as "monetary gold" rather than gold for which restitution should be made to victims. Even in the early postwar years, when Europe was numbed by the horrors uncovered after victory, these were nasty decisions.

Mr Cook rightly insisted that all Foreign Office records should be made available; the Americans, who will later this week publish the results of their researches, have also insisted on opening up to scrutiny hundreds of thousands of official documents. The findings may be embarrassing, even shameful. But it is right to publish them.

Malcolm Rifkind was also sympathetic to calls for greater light on this dark issue. But Mr Cook has, in his first working day in office, made clear that it is not only in historical matters that the Foreign Office must show more transparency. Nor is the moral dimension to be confined to the past: human rights are set to be a touchstone of Labour policy, affecting arms sales, relationships with rogue states and doubtless a mass of hard cases. But, as the gold issue has demonstrated, it is all too easy to take bureaucratic policy decisions that wholly ignore the need for justice to victims. That is as true today as it was in 1945.

AN ORANGE READ

Here is a shortlist that gives literary prizes a good name

The literary world offers glittering prizes to all and sundry. There is the Booker, the Whitbread, the Somerset Maugham, the Thumping Good Read; the list goes on and on. Last year the name of Orange was added to this roll, reviled in some quarters and revered in others for selecting not by nationality but by sex: women only, please. "Outrageous", said some; "wouldn't be tolerated the other way round". Redressing a balance, said the rest; "about time, too." And then there were those who wondered what purpose yet another book prize might serve. Why should the tastes of a few cloistered judges dictate what we ought to read?

For readers, prizes do not dictate. Prizes draw attention, prizes suggest what might — out of what is now more than 100,000 books published in this country in a year — delight a bookshop browser. Would Kate Atkinson's engaging novel, *Behind the Scenes at the Museum*, have reached the thousands it did if it had not won the Whitbread Prize in 1996? Would Helen Dunmore's beautiful and chilling *A Spell of Winter* have entranced so many had she not been the worthy first winner of the Orange Prize?

Now it is Orange time again, and the judges have produced their new shortlist. The first striking aspect of this year's crop is that four of the six are North Americans: one of the prize's founders believes this is evident

of a reluctance on the part of some British publishers to back British women writers. That is debatable; it is, however, certainly evidence of the extraordinary power and polish of women now writing in the United States and Canada. Each of these four novels (two of them first efforts) displays the kind of imagination rare in any novelist, male or female, from Margaret Atwood's exploration of the mind of a 19th-century murderer, to Jane Mendelsohn's soaring recreation of icon and aviatrix Amelia Earhart.

Anne Michaels sweeps the reader through postwar Poland and present day Greece; E. Annie Proulx traces the immigrants' path with their common possession, a six-button squeezebox. Perhaps the British should not be surprised that their vast former colonies, possessed of such a splendid literary heritage, have come into their own.

Also worth noting — if one can manage to put aside the fuss about women-only prizes, or British prizes dominated by the un-British — is that this list, overall, is one that would give any Booker shortlist a run for its money: the writers' sex is quite beside the point. With Manda Scott's gripping Glasgow tale of genetic crime, and Deirdre Madden's penetrating look at the Troubles in Northern Ireland, here are six books that should send every reader scurrying out to library and shop. Fine writing is alive and well and rewarded in Britain.

Tax and interest under Labour

From Mr George Guise

Sir, It is characteristic that both the CBI and Ken Livingstone are calling for tax rises within three days of the election, whereas the Institute of Directors is not (reports, May 5).

The CBI predominantly comprises large, bureaucratised organisations with a weather eye always out for state support, either from manipulated exchange and interest rates, defence contracts, or even direct injection of taxpayers' money in the cause of something called "UK plc". By contrast, the IoD membership consists predominantly of lean, market-driven businesses which only ask that governments leave them alone.

Tax rises are never a good idea.

They do not take pressure out of an economy, except in the sense that a nail takes pressure out of a tyre. They are the last resort of a defeated exchequer and new Labour should never forget what old Labour discovered by experience: that high taxation and concealed unemployment are the twin killer viruses of a modern economy and lead straight to the opposition benches.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE GUISE
(Prime Minister's Policy Unit,
1986-90),
90 Longacre, WC2.
May 5.

From Mr Richard Dawson

Sir, The Chancellor, at today's meeting with the Governor of the Bank of England, has virtually put him in full control of interest rates. I trust that he will not now abdicate all responsibility for inflation, when he has a ready remedy to hand.

The choice between interest rate and taxation as the means to control inflation could be resolved if interest were made liable for a VAT-like tax at a special and easily variable rate, and which could be manipulated so as to have the same impact as an alteration in interest rates.

This would enable the Chancellor to increase effective internal interest rates to control inflation without having any effect on the sterling exchange rate. As VAT is reclaimable by industry this would not damage investment by it.

Treasury borrowing costs would not rise, as they do when interest rates rise, and effectively would fall as the Treasury would be the recipient of the extra VAT. It would, of course, still be possible to influence exchange rates by interest rate changes, possibly neutralising the internal effect by an opposite movement of VAT.

The tax would be progressive in nature. Borrowers would be paying no more than they would have done had interest rates increased; while lenders (who are likely to be the better off) would receive less interest than would otherwise have been the case.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD DAWSON,
Kings Farm,
Pembrey, Halstead, Essex.
May 6.

From Mr Howard Mitchell

Sir, Anatole Kaletsky [Labour must soften sterling to avoid devaluation later], Business, May 2, advocates the reduction of demand by increasing taxation as an alternative to raising interest rates.

Would it not be better for credit card companies (and other lenders) to restrict credit and to increase the minimum monthly repayment to say 20 per cent of the outstanding debt?

Yours faithfully,
HOWARD MITCHELL,
Hilltop House,
208 The Hill, Burford, Oxfordshire.

From Mrs Georgina Harrison

Sir, If domestic fuel taxes need to be harmonised with Europe (report, May 6), should not bees taxes be harmonised too? It is crazy that brewers have to take drays to Calais for the black-market vans to bring the beer back.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGINA HARRISON,
Castle Farmhouse, Odell, Bedford.
May 6.

Major's future

From Mr Peter D. J. Wood

Sir, Could not the MCC consider Mr John Major for their president the next time this post falls vacant?

He is ideally suited and qualified in so many ways, not least in his devotion to the noble game, and although the office would bring no monetary rewards I have a sneaking feeling that Mr Major might even consider it a greater honour than being Prime Minister.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
P. D. J. WOOD,
2 St John's Road, Sevenoaks, Kent.
May 3.

At last

From Mr Keigh Clough

Sir, I realised over the weekend that Mr Major's elusive feel-good factor has returned.

Yours sincerely,
KEITH CLOUGH,
15 Sutton Wick Lane,
Drayton, Abingdon, Oxfordshire.
May 5.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

'Dream tickets' on offer to the Tories

From Mr J. F. Penley

Sir, I believe that sleaze and disunity among Conservative MPs and candidates were the major factors which fuelled the nation's overwhelming desire for a change of government.

Leadership candidates do not appear even to have paused to consider whether their unrepresentative and now discredited electoral college is the appropriate body to choose a new party leader. How for instance are the views of the Scottish and Welsh Conservatives going to be canvassed and which English MP is going to take the lead?

Yours faithfully,
J. F. PENLEY,
Longmead, Rockstowes,
Uley, Dursley, Gloucestershire.
May 5.

From Sir Jeremy Elwes

Sir, It is widely accepted that the disunity apparent in the Conservative Government over the last five years was a major factor in its failure to be re-elected.

As the only senior figure who challenged John Major as leader during that period, how can you possibly describe John Redwood as "untainted" (headline, later editions)?

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY ELWES,
Crispian Cottage,
Weald Road, Sevenoaks, Kent.
May 6.

From Mr Robert C. Seeckts

Sir, New Conservatives searching for a dream ticket need surely look no further than Kent for Michael Howard and Ann Widdecombe.

Yours truly,
ROBERT SEECKTS,
Thorpe House, 18/20 London Road,
Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

From Mr John Hardy

Sir, In your editorial today you review the claims of Messrs Clarke, Redwood, Howard, Hague and Lilley to the mantle of the Tory leadership.

Your front-page headline on Monday April 28 proclaimed "Pordillo and Heseltine would fight for crown".

A case of a week is a long time in politics?

Yours sincerely,
JOHN HARDY,
3 Raymond Buildings,
Gray's Inn, WC1.
May 6.

From Mr C. E. Crace

Sir, Could Mr Douglas Hogg be persuaded to "throw his hat into the ring"? I do not particularly want him to become leader of the Conservative Party, but it would be nice to see the last of his hat.

Yours faithfully,
C. E. CRACE,
Lodge Farm, Little Hadham,
Ware, Hertfordshire.
May 6.

EU and environment

From Mr Michael Welbank

Sir, Lord Cranbrook is right to draw attention to the environmental implications of EU enlargement (letter, April 25) and the opportunities that the incoming UK President of the EU Council will have to make a distinctive British contribution on this issue.

Pollution is no respecter of national boundaries and the creation of a Europe-wide approach to environmental issues is one of the great EU success stories, whatever the difficulties in application.

The danger in any enlargement debate is that economic considerations will be separated from environmental issues. That is a recipe for disaster.

But to require countries from Central

and Eastern Europe to achieve EU environmental standards as a pre-condition for entry is unrealistic in practical and financial terms.

What can be done however is to require the close integration of economic and environmental issues at all levels and the establishment of robust and effective land-use planning systems.

A further requirement is transparency and openness in setting out the environmental implications of all policies.

This will not hinder economic growth but can guide it to avoid environmental disasters and to advance environmental standards.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL WELBANK
(President, Royal Town Planning
Institute, 1993-94),
24 South Hill Park, NW3.
April 29.

with other friends from the Bar. One day, an older barrister told me that "as a clerk" I was not allowed to hold conversations in the robing room unless I was giving information about "the list" of cases to be heard. I was very embarrassed.

Peter Taylor was there and gave me a real dressing down, telling him: "Leo is a practising barrister and is not only entitled to come in but is welcomed by all of us."

I have never forgotten this example of Lord Taylor's fair and honourable treatment of all who had the good fortune to know him.

Yours faithfully,
LEO BLAIR,
19 Kenton Drive,
Shrewsbury, Shropshire.
May 1.

Sometimes, because I did miss the real work of a barrister, I would go into the Bar "robing room" and chat

Taylor's justice

From Mr Leo Blair

Sir, May I add to your obituary of the late Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor of Gosforth (April 30), an incident which shows how generous and kind he was to those who were not able to help themselves?

As a practising barrister, I suffered a "stroke" on July 4, 1964. Some years later I was fortunate to be able to do reasonably easy legal tasks. The Chairman of Durham Quarter Sessions gave me the opportunity of acting Clerk to the Court: reading out charges, dealing with jurors, etc. All simple work.

Sometimes, because I did miss the real work of a barrister, I would go into the Bar "robing room" and chat

with other friends from the Bar. One day, an older barrister told me



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

May 6: The Rt Hon Kenneth Clarke (Chancellor of the Exchequer), the Rt Hon Michael Howard (Secretary of State for the Home Department), the Rt Hon Malcolm Rifkind (Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs), the Rt Hon Tony Newton (Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons), the Rt Hon Ian Gammie (Secretary of State for the Environment), the Rt Hon William Waldegrave (Chief Secretary to the Treasury), the Rt Hon Michael Foyle (Secretary of State for Scotland), the Rt Hon Sir Patrick Mayhew (Secretary of State for Northern Ireland), the Rt Hon Roger Freeman (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister in Charge of the Office of Public Services), the Rt Hon Ian Lang (President of the Board of Trade and Secretary of State for Trade and Industry), the Rt Hon Gillian Shephard (Secretary of State for Education and Employment), and the Rt Hon Peter Lilley (Secretary of State for Social Security) had audiences of The Queen this afternoon and took leave upon delivering up the Seal of their respective appointments.

The Rt Hon Douglas Hogg was received in farewell audience by Her Majesty and took leave upon relinquishing his appointment as Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

The Rt Hon Anthony Blair MP (Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury) had an audience of The Queen this evening.

The Duke of Edinburgh this evening presented the 1997 Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion and attended a celebration of Twenty Five Years of the Templeton Prize at Westminster Abbey, London SW1.

May & The Prince Edward, Trustee, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, today gave a Luncheon at Buckingham Palace.

May & The Princess Royal, President of Patrons, Crime Concern.

Today's royal engagements

The Duke of Edinburgh, as Honorary Life Member of the Royal Association of British Dairy Farmers, will present the Prince Philip Award for 1996 and certificates of merit for research and development in dairy farming, at Buckingham Palace at 10:00; as Patron and Trustee, will attend receptions for young people who have achieved the Gold Standard in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award at St James's Palace at 11:30 and 4:00; and as Patron, will attend a reception for the Air League at St James's Palace at 7:15.

Prince Edward will attend a reception and concert given by the London Symphony Orchestra, Barbican, London EC2 at 7:15.

The Princess Royal, as President, Animal Health Trust, will attend a council of management meeting, the Kennel Club, 1-5 Clarges Street, London W1, at 11:30; and will attend the Fishmongers' Company court ladies dinner at Fishmongers' Hall at 7:25.

The Duke of Gloucester, as Patron, Royal Anthropological Institute, will visit the offices at 50 Fitzroy Street, London W1, at 11:00; and as

this morning visited Tyneside Family Literacy projects at St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Wallsend Road, North Shields, and at Westgate Hill Primary School, Newcastle upon Tyne, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear (Colonel Sir Ralph Carr-Elliott).

Her Royal Highness, President, Save the Children Fund, this afternoon attended the Volunteers Reception and Newcastle City Appeal Luncheon at the Mansion House, Newcastle upon Tyne.

The Princess Royal, President, the Royal Yachting Association, later opened Castlegate Quay Water Activity Centre and HM Bark Endeavour, as a training centre for young people, at Castlegate Quay Heritage Project, Riverside, Stockton-on-Tees, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of County Durham (Sir Paul Nicholson).

Her Royal Highness, Patron, National Association of Victims Support Schemes, this evening attended the play "The Trial of Perkin and Maud" at the Lord Chief Justice's Court, Royal Courts of Justice, London WC2.

KENSINGTON PALACE

May & The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon, Grand President, St John Ambulance, this afternoon visited the West Midlands and was received by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of West Midlands (Mr Robert Taylor).

Her Royal Highness opened the St John Ambulance Divisional Headquarters at Bent Street, Brierley Hill, and the Headquarters of the Oldbury and Langley Combined Divisions of St John Ambulance at Birchfield Lane, Oldbury.

YORK HOUSE

May & The Duchess of Kent, Patron, United Kingdom Committee for United Nations Children's Fund, this morning arrived at Heathrow Airport, London, from Cape Town, South Africa.

Mr Julian Tompkins was in attendance.

Memorial services

Mr and Mrs W.B.S. (Bobby) Walker

A service of thanksgiving for the life of Mr Bobby Walker, a former deputy UK senior partner, Peat Marwick, Mitchell & Company, and Mrs Terry Walker, was held yesterday at the Church of St Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe with Dr Anne, The Rev John Paul officiated.

Mrs Caroline Richards read the lesson and Mrs Sara Watkins, daughter, read from *Modern Man Facing Death* by Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh. Sir John Grenfell gave an address.

The KPMG choir, conducted by Mr Philip Cowman, and accompanied by Mr Andrew Lucas, organist, sang during the service. Among other memorial wreaths, Mr Timothy Watkins (son-in-law), Mr and Mrs Gill Kaye, Mr and Mrs David with Mr and Mrs Mark, Mr and Mrs Robin Odgers, Mr and Mrs Richard Vernon and other members of the family, Mr and Mrs Michael Thompson, senior partner, KPMG UK, and Mr and Mrs Michael Thompson, London office also representing the governing body of Rugby School. Mr and Mrs Michael Thompson and their wife and present members of staff, and other friends.

Luncheons

Lord Mayor of Westminster

The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayor of Westminster were the hosts at a luncheon held yesterday at City Hall.

Mid Atlantic Club

Mr Giles Radice, MP, was the guest of honour and speaker at a luncheon of the Mid Atlantic Club held yesterday at Dartmouth House. Mr Alan Lee Williams presided.

Reception

Titus Sains Decher

The Partners of Titus Sains Decher were the hosts on May 1 at a reception held at Middle Temple Hall. A performance of *La Bohème* by the Pavilion Opera was held afterwards for their friends and family.

University of Westminster

Mr Tony Girling, President of the Law Society, was the speaker at the third annual Kent Law School Alumni Dinner, held at the Law Society on May 6.

Royal Over-Seas League

Sir Geoffrey Ellerton, Chairman of the Royal Over-Seas League, presided at the annual meeting held yesterday at Over-Seas House, St James's.

Appointments

Mr Henry Brock Trehowen, Mrs Esma Searwa Martins and Mr Alastair Laird McGreavy to be full-time Immigration Adjudicators; Mr Trehowen to be a Special Adjudicator from June 2. Mrs Martins from June 9 and Mr McGreavy from July 1. They will sit in Greater London.

Mr Rameshwar (Ray) Singh to be a District Judge on the Wales and Chester Circuit from yesterday.

Germany surrendered unconditionally to the Allies, 1945.



Susan Ryder with her new portrait of the Queen, Patron of the Royal Automobile Club which commissioned the painting to mark its centenary. The portrait goes on show at the annual exhibition of the Royal Society of Portrait Painters, which will be opened today by Prince Michael of Kent, President of the RAC, at the Mall Galleries

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: David Hume, philosopher, Edinburgh, 1711; Robert Browning, poet, London, 1812; Norman Shaw, architect, Edinburgh, 1831; Johannes Brahms, composer, Hamburg, 1833; Plotk Tschitschikov, composer, Votkinsk, Russia, 1840; Archibald Primrose, 5th Earl of Rosebery, Prime Minister 1908-1915, London, 1847; Sir Rabindranath Tagore, poet, Nobel laureate 1913, Calcutta, 1861; Marshal Józef Piłsudski, President of Yugoslavia 1935-80, Warsaw, 1867; Gary Cooper, film star, Helena, Montana, 1901; Huw Wheldon, broadcaster, 1916.

DEATHS: H.W. Bunting, artist and caricaturist, Kendal, Cumbria, 1811; Antonio Salieri, composer, Vienna, 1825; Thomas Barnes, Editor of *The Times*, 1817-41, London, 1892; Henry Brougham, Baron Brougham and Vaux, Lord Chancellor 1830-34, a founder of London University, 1828; James Nasmyth, inventor of the steam hammer, 1801; William Lever, 1st Viscount Leverhulme, soap manufacturer and philanthropist, Hareholt, 1925; George Lansbury, leader of the Labour Party 1922-35, London, 1940; Sir James Frazer, anthropologist, Cambridge, 1941; The first Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, opened in London, 1663.

The first Isle of Man TT race was held, 1907.

Nearly 2,000 people perished when *Lusitania* was sunk by a German submarine off the coast of Ireland, 1915.

Germany surrendered unconditionally to the Allies, 1945.

Today's birthdays

Mr Scobie Breasley, Jockey, 82; Professor Alasdair Breckinridge, chairman, North West Regional Health Authority, 60; Lord Briggs, 76; Mr Peter Carey, writer, 54; Viscount Cross, 77; Sir Charles Cunningham, civil servant, 91; Professor A.W. Cuthbert, FRS, Master, Finswimming College, Cambridge, 65; Mr Murray Easton, former managing director, Yarrow Shipbuilders, 46; Mr Mik Flord, former director, Institute of Contemporary Arts, 48; Sir Sir Ray Geddes, former chairman, Dunlop Rubber Company, 85; Professor R.Y. Goodwin, architect, 88; Mr James Gowans, FRS, former deputy chairman, Medical Research Council, 73; The Right Rev Robert Taylor Halliday, former Bishop of Brechin, & Viscount Hampden, 80; Mr Robin Hanbury-Tenison, explorer, 61; Mr David Hatch, chairman, National Consumer Council, 88; Mr Michael Hawkes, former vice-chairman, Kilmerton Group, 68; Sir Lenox London, 62; Major-General H.G. Woods, 73.

Hewin, Australian industrialist, 80; Miss Anya Hindmarch, designer, 29; Mr Michael Hopkins, architect, 62; Canon Peter Hull, Headmaster, Chetham's School of Music, Manchester, 48; Mrs Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, author, 78; Lord Kirkhill, 67; Sir David Llewellyn, company director, 63; Mr David Leach, potter, 65; Mr James Lever, organist, 88; Sir Neil Macfarlane, chairman, Seafarers, 61; Dr Tony O'Reilly, chairman, H.J. Heinz Company, 61; Mr Richard O'Sullivan, actor, 53; Mr John Padavan, former chairman, AAH, 59; Professor Canon Roy Porter, theologian, 76; Mr W.M. Pybus, company chairman, 74; Mr C.J. Saunders, Headmaster, Lancing College, 77; Miss Elizabeth Stiderstrom, soprano, 70; Miss Mary Spillane, founder, Colour Me Beautiful, 47; Mr David Truill, former Lord Mayor of London, 62; Major-General H.G. Woods, 73.

Mollie Elaine Bath, of Haslemere, Surrey, left estate valued at £133,402 net.

She left £1,000 each to Dr Barnardo's, RNLI, Imperial Cancer Research Fund and Cancer Research UK.

Thomas Wayne Bevan, of Lymington, Hampshire, left estate valued at £150,000 net.

Freida Margaret Richard, Kemp of Arlington, Polesden Lacey, Surrey, left estate valued at £2,950,936 net.

Elizabeth Anne Legh-Jones, of Jordans, Buckinghamshire, left estate valued at £2,334,567 net.

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How do you arbitrate on moral standards today?

Finding a morality to fill a vacuum

Here is a tough one. How do you set moral standards when there aren't any? The Broadcasting Standards Commission's report published today is a masterpiece of candour. It reveals that there is no national agreement on what is unacceptable, unsocial or even shocking.

This admission is shocking in itself because it reveals that the commission is unsure of its job. The BSC, set in church-like architecture near Westminster Abbey, is charged with policing taste, decency and privacy across all radio and television.

It has now spent some of its million-pound-plus annual budget on research by the University of Leeds to tell it what it could have learnt at the pub or from an evening's channel-hopping. We live in two nations, one utterly appalled by the entertainment that the other cannot get enough of.

Anybody who ever writes in favour of free speech knows the popularity of censorship. "It's a pity we can't have more of it," a reader in Southend-on-Sea recently wrote to me. "I don't shudder at the prudishness of the past; I look back on it as a golden age of entertainment." Another wrote from Hampshire: "What I object to is being turned into an unwilling Peeping Tom."

I have some sympathy with their recoil. By no means am I always on the laissez-faire side. Certainly, I have zero tolerance for one of the two phenomena most hated by British television viewers: bad language. Zero tolerance, that is, for four-letter words broadcast before 9pm and at any time of day if uttered in any non-fictional programme where voices share the common currency of acceptable speech. Nothing on air has offended me this year more than Anna Ford saying "shit" on Radio 4's *Today*. That was in the back of a taxi in Dublin at the time made it worse. Doesn't she know that this voice of Britain crosses the Channel and the Irish Sea?

The other major cause of offence, according to the BSC's new report, is the depiction of homosexuality as normal. That grievance I'll have to leave to the others. Homosexuality seems to me no more contagious than heterosexuality. But swearing, everybody knows, is catching. Simply switching off soap operas would save many in the audience from the shocks that they complain about, such as the woman who protested that 5.30pm is too early for premature ejaculation (an affliction hinted at on *Neighbours*). What can viewers expect if they want to see family sagas dragged out over three, four or five nights of a week? The poor writers have to throw in the whole Kraft-Ebbing kit to keep the plot going.



BRENDA MADDOX

Still, the BSC's statistics are nice to have, especially since opinion researchers acquitted themselves so well last week. The commission now holds sound evidence of the sophistication of the general public. People by and large do not blame television for violence; rather, they see the cause as lying within the breakdown of family discipline. They accept, in general, that regulation should be lighter on subscription channels than on the free terrestrials. What they really dislike they would have toned down, not eliminated.

The gnawing problem, the report says, is that there is no longer any common language for talking about moral standards. People know right from wrong but they do not have the words in which to express their principles. They are certain of only two things: that they do not live by the standards of their parents and that the current golden rule nowadays is not "love thy neighbour" but "protect thy family".

Questions of privacy leave them flummoxed, although it would be good to know whether the public thinks that the privacy of Cherie Blair was invaded when she was caught by photographers at the front door in her nightdress.

Unfortunately, nothing about the BSC's vigorous exercise in measuring the national moral ambivalence, as Lady Howe, the commission's chairman, says ruefully in her introduction, "makes the business of regulating any easier".

Or but it does. The BSC has to carry on doing just what it did before April 1 when new legislation tucked the old Broadcasting Complaints Commission into it listen to complaints which, by and large, it does not uphold. Taste has moved on. A large part of the audience simply has been outvoted. But it needs a shoulder to cry on.

Michael Jackson, Channel 4's new chief executive, has the easiest job in British broadcasting. He joins a channel with a firm sense of identity, sound finances and the confidence that if the viewers squawk, the channel is only fulfilling its remit.

Play the BBC he leaves behind, like a crumbling country house which cannot attract new staff. To know why a new head of drama has been so hard to find, you could listen to Peter Anson, Channel 4's own head of drama, boast that neither Michael Grade nor John Willis, the director of programmes, ever asked to read a script before he commissioned a play. Perhaps the BBC could find a management consultant to tell it to leave creative people alone.

Brooke is film's funny girl

GRANADA executives have shrouded their latest film venture with much secrecy. *The Listener* can reveal that the mystery American star signed up by their film division is Brooke Shields.

Shields, who began her film career as a child actor in Louis Malle's *Pretty Baby*, will star in *The Misadventures of Margaret*, a comedy jointly funded by Granada Films, British Screen and the French company TFI.

The film will be directed by the British documentary maker Brian Skeet, who has adapted his screenplay from Cathleen Shiner's novel *Romeau's Niece*. Shooting will begin in England in June.

Rock solid

HEART FM, the London-based rock music station, is no match for terrorists. The station continued broadcasting last Thursday afternoon, despite receiving a bomb threat connected with a suspicious-looking vehicle parked in the vicinity of its west London



Brooke Shields: new film. Melvyn Bragg: new distributor

studios. The police were called and ordered Heart and all surrounding businesses to evacuate their premises pronto.

Determined not to interrupt his show, however, disc jockey Danny Pietroni continued broadcasting throughout the security alert, ignoring police appeals for him to clear out.

Not wanting to be seen abandoning his staff in times of need, the station's programme director Keith Pringle went into overdrive barricading the windows in Pietroni's studio to ensure that minimum damage was done to his DJ should a bomb really go off.

Pringle then sat with Pietroni throughout the scare.



Melvyn Bragg: new distributor

The plucky or foolish Pietroni, depending how you look at it, did not mention the incident on air.

Meanwhile, many of Heart's staff made a hasty retreat to the nearest watering hole. "It was the safest place to be," one staffer assures me.

Absolutely spicy

JENNIFER Saunders seems smitten with the Spice Girls. Having performed in a look-alike band to raise money for Comic Relief, she is now co-writing a feature film for the pop group.

Described as *A Hard Day's Night* meets *Witches' World*, the film will attempt to capture some of the madcap fun

of the old Beatles' movies. It will start filming in July and songs from the movie will feature on the Spice Girls' second album.

Details of the project are expected to be unveiled at the Cannes film festival this week.

A fair cop

FANS of *The Archers* may well be wondering this week what it is about the voice of the character Bert Fry that sounds so familiar.

Although Fry has been mentioned in the show in recent months, he has not appeared in person since last summer when Robert Hume, the actor who played him for eight years, died.

Fry reappeared on Radio 4 on Monday when the Yorkshire actor Eric Allen took over the part. A sheepish insider at BBC's Pebble Mill studios in Birmingham, where *The Archers* is recorded, confesses that Allen has appeared in the series before, playing the role of the police officer who arrested Susan Carter in October 1993 after she gave shelter to her brother, Clive Horrobin, when he was on the run from the law.

Left Bank

MELVYN Bragg's *South*

Bank Show and producer-distributor Reiner Moritz, who has distributed the London Weekend Television arts series around the world for the past 20 years, have parted company.

Instead, Moritz's London-based distribution company R.M. Associates has now launched its own series *The Arts File* for international screening, featuring programmes from BBC's *The Works* — including the yet-to-be-seen *A Death in Venice* about the burning down of La Fenice.

Explaining the break with LWT, Moritz says: "For the sake of ratings the *South Bank Show* has been looking more and more towards British subjects — British writers, British entertainers and other local talents. These are interesting to British viewers but not so interesting to non-English-speaking audiences."

He recalls internationally appealing subjects of the past, such as *Andy Warhol* and *Jean Genet*, and the fact that the *South Bank Show* had the last major interview with Simone de Beauvoir.

LWT, which has now signed another distributor for the programme, commented: "We decided in this cut-throat commercial world to explore other avenues for selling the *South Bank Show*."

A night of true blues

SAATCHI and Saatchi was quick to exploit the Conservative Party's massacre at the polls last Thursday. The agency, which had held the Tory advertising account for 17 years until it controversially walked with Maurice Saatchi in 1995, hired a specially liveried van to drive around key locations during the big night.

The vehicle had a picture of a dejected John Major holding his head in his hands and bore the message: "John: Look what happens when you change advertising agencies." Its driver mischievously lingered outside Conservative Central Office, at M&C Saatchi, 36 Golden Square, the Tories' new agency, and at Major's constituency headquarters in Huntingdon.

Adam Crozier, Saatchi and Saatchi's joint chief executive, insists: "We were not trying to make a serious political point — we were just having a bit of fun." The fact, however, that the

account is set to be reviewed following a series of clashes between Maurice Saatchi and Brian Mawhinney, the Tory chairman, will surely not have escaped his notice.

THE flagrant use of images of political figures in press ads in the wake of the election have raised the thorny issue of unsolicited celebrity endorsement. Pictures of Cherie Blair, seemingly downing a bottle of Holsten Pils while uttering the line "smoother, cleaner and surprisingly easy to drink", and of John Major in a pullover, supposedly taking advantage of a stock-clearance special offer last weekend at Courts, the furniture chain, have raised a few eyebrows.

The practice of using shots of famous people without their permission is allowable, however, as long as the images are not "adverse or offensive" and do not imply the person is really endorsing the product.

An Advertising Standards Authority spokeswoman says: "There could be someone somewhere who might well think Cherie endorses Holsten, but most people would see it as just a humorous topical ad so there would not be a problem."

A KEY exercise in whether creative ideas can travel is about to take place. Tango's mould-breaking approach to advertising is about to be exported to China. A new TV commercial has been devised in collaboration with World Writers, which specialises in adapting ads for foreign markets. An insider says: "It's still wacky but not as wacky as the British work."

BELINDA ARCHER



Cherie Blair: storm in a teacup

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Michael Jackson, newly appointed successor to Michael Grade, has been discussing his plans. Carol Midgley reports

The announcement that Michael Jackson is to become the chief executive of Channel 4 put an immediate and intriguing question mark over one of its best-loved executives.

No sooner had the news filtered out that Michael Grade's successor had at last been chosen, than staff at Channel 4 were asking whether it spelt the potential loss of John Willis.

Willis, the general director of programmes at Channel 4, who made no secret of his own desire to get the job, is expected to make a decision about his future when he returns from holiday tomorrow. He once clashed openly with Jackson, director of television and controller of BBC1 and previous of BBC2, accusing him of being the "copycat criminal of British television".

During the spat in 1995, Willis accused Jackson, 39, of turning BBC2 into a mirror image of Channel 4, showing disregard for viewers by scheduling similar programmes in head to head clashes.

But if Mr Jackson harbours any grudges about the attack, he was hiding it well yesterday when he spoke about his appointment for the first time. Jackson, the whip-smart son of a baker who is tipped to be the next director-general of the BBC, made it clear that he would like Willis to remain, but it was not apparent whether Willis himself will wish to. Staff at Channel 4 say that if rumours about Willis leaving are true, they will have lost one of their most approachable and talented executives.

"I have a great deal of respect for John. Jackson is a theatre full of journalists yesterday. Talking to people at Channel 4 over the weekend I was struck by the

An information junkie takes over at Channel 4

huge amount of affection there is for him. I am going to sit down with John when he gets back and talk to him about the future. I'm looking forward to that and I hope to have a good relationship with him."

Of the charge that he was a copycat of Channel 4, he said: "I refused it then and I still refuse it now."

Some insiders believe Willis, who spent 19 years at Yorkshire TV before moving to Channel 4 in 1988, may have missed out on the job because he had spent 24 years almost exclusively in factual programming. It may have been decided that he had not fully developed the innovative flair needed to oversee arts and entertainment programmes. Willis has presided over some of the best documentaries on television and, founded, among other series, *Cutting Edge*.

Most, however, believe Jackson — "Well it could have been worse, I could have been called George Michael" — is very good news for Channel 4 with a proven record of talent, experience and innovative thought.

Although less of a colourful and outspoken figure than his predecessor, Michael Grade, he was without doubt one



Antagonists or just good colleagues?



John Willis, left. Michael Jackson

played at being a TV scheduler.

David Cardiff, his tutor at the Central London School of Communication, where he graduated with first-class honours in media studies, said Jackson had sized up the entire industry even as a student. He

had written a dissertation on Channel 4 before Channel 4 had started.

The broadcaster Muriel Gray, who worked with him on Channel 4's *The Media Show*, described him as a leader uninterested in hierarchies and pecking orders.

"His whole life is a quest for information," she says. "He was more interested in making programmes than smirking up to people, so I am surprised he has risen so high so fast."

Jackson has explained that his obsession for detail is to compensate for his non-cultural upbringing. "Because I grew up in a house without books in it and because I didn't go into an art gallery before I was 18, I had to be self-taught, had to be curious," he says.

People who come from an Oxbridge background are often very well informed but not at all curious, and curiosity is the important thing."

Yesterday Jackson admitted that it had been difficult to leave the BBC. "Yes I did have a great job and I loved the people I worked with. I have been supportive of the changes that have taken place there.

"It was a real wrench to leave but this is

the best job in British broadcasting. I feel a great attachment to the channel."

His arrival may signal the end of certain shows which he has criticised for appealing to "young, lager-drinking, upwardly mobile men" at the expense of originality. These are, however, unlikely to include *Eurorush*, of which Jackson yesterday declared himself a fan, and Chris Evans's *TFI Friday* which he described as "one of the best entertainment shows on television".

Jackson, openly a critic of Channel 4's late-night *Girlie Show*, indicated he would defend Channel 4's reputation for putting out controversial programmes but acknowledged mistakes had been made. The channel has recently been criticised for offending public taste with programmes such as *Brookside* and *TFI Friday*.

"If you have got something wrong, hold your hands up and admit it," he said. "If there is something that you passionately believe is right, then defend it. I think the channel has a good record of doing that in the past. I have no problems with programmes that are rude, as long as they are innovative and distinctive, as long as they are good shows."

The relationship with television watchdogs should be "one of candid self-criticism", he said.

Sir Michael Bishop, Channel 4's chairman, said: "Michael brings a wealth of talent and experience from his position at the BBC. I think it is marvellous that someone who was so vociferous in the campaign to establish Channel 4 in his very early career is coming as its chief executive."

Michael Jackson takes up the position on June 1.

Champions of children's radio bid for air time

Support is growing for a station dedicated to young listeners, says Gillian Thomas

One upon a time, stories for children were an important part of BBC Radio, along with plays, features, 'balls; quizzes, and music — all of which were specially designed for them. But as television grew in popularity, broadcasting houses gradually abandoned them.

The daily *Children's Hour* was axed in 1964 and *Children's Favourites*, the Saturday morning request programme, in 1967. *Listen with Mother* stopped in 1982. Now, apart from schools programmes transmitted in the middle of the night for teachers to record, there is only one regular slot for children of any age: a half-hour drama on Radio 4 on Sundays at 7pm.

Yet under-15s make up 20 per cent of the population. Furthermore Article 17 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulates that the mass media should "disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to children". That clearly includes radio.

For all those who still regard it as an important medium for children, a window of opportunity has now opened up. A radio station called Children's Radio UK is among proposals for the future use of 25 kHz long-wave which had to be submitted to the Radio Authority by March 31.

The frequency was originally allocated to the BBC but never used, so the Department of National Heritage passed it to the Radio Authority for a fourth national independent radio service, alongside Classic FM, Virgin Radio and Talk Radio.

Though most industry insiders still expect the winner to be a sports channel, the proposal for Children's Radio UK is gathering support. It plans to address four age groups under-3s, 4-7s, 8-11s and 12-16s. Its aim is to encourage learning "through discovery and enjoyment". Help-lines, a website and full multi-media material

Radio helps children to learn, attend and listen'

"Children have been abandoned in radio's rush to segregate itself into adult chat or chart-driven formats," she says.

The time has come to reinvent it with programmes that will attract children of the 21st century."

Children's Radio UK would cover everything from rhythm and rhyme to health, careers and money-management. Some programmes would be designed to be heard in play-groups and schools as well as at home. Special-needs would be catered for too.

Susan Stranks argues that the benefits of investing even a tiny percentage of the money being spent on nursery and primary schooling would be enormous.

"Alphabet, speech, tables and movements are learnt much faster with the help of music, stories and rhymes," she says. "But primary schools are often short of texts or lack teachers who can play an instrument."



Children's favourites: campaigners want a return to special broadcasting for young listeners, abandoned in the rush for adult chat and chart formats

A MORI survey carried out in 1993-94 by Pam Enderby, now a professor at Sheffield University, showed that one in five under-5s had communication difficulties.

"When children watch television, the vision and sound compete for their attention and they tend to be distracted by what they see," she says. "Radio helps them learn to attend and listen."

In May 1994 Dr Sally Ward of the Hearing, Speech & Language Centre in London reported that the commonest single developmental difficulty in the pre-school years was auditory perception. In the majority of cases the cause was the child's lack of "selection auditory attention" — in other words they were not listening properly.

Provisional start-up and running costs for the service are estimated to be around £44 million for the first four years. This would cover operations on 22 kHz as well as the associated digital band which is likely to be a condition of taking it up.

Funding would be sought from the National Lottery, Independent Radio, the BBC licence fee, local education authorities and other commercial and charitable sponsors.

"Children's programmes disappeared from radio because they were not considered to be cost-effective, yet as a medium of communication it is unique," says Susan Stranks. "It adds a room to every home and to lock children out is indefensible."

No such thing as a silent politician

Journalists see so much mendacity and hypocrisy in public life — ministers who say one thing and think another — that most are deeply cynical. Which is why there was more amusement than alarm yesterday over a report from an "aide" to Tony Blair that he would drown on lunches between ministers and journalists.

Most political journalists and their editors entertain ministers and MPs at least two or three times a week, and they don't expect the lunches to stop whatever the orders from Downing Street.

By lunching politicians, journalists get the inside gossip and burnish their reputations by relaying it, unattributed, to their readers and demonstrating how well informed they are.

The deal works both ways. As well as a free meal, the politicians get an opportunity to float their policies, defiance party enemies unhampered by any obstruction from Whitehall and agenda-setting space in influential newspapers. As Michael White of *The Guardian* points out, one of the paradoxes of power is a feeling of impotence and a



need to address voters over the heads of the formal government machinery.

Yet even the most cynical of journalists have been impressed by the discipline and control exercised by new Labour in opposition, especially during the six-week election campaign. Tony Bevins, the veteran political editor of *The Independent*, says it is the most all-enveloping, most disciplined political operation he has ever seen.

That is why they were not surprised, as *The Daily Telegraph* certainly was yesterday, by the "unprecedented" degree of control Tony Blair is exercising, assisted by minister-without-portfolio Peter Mandelson, chief of staff Jonathan Powell and press secretary Alastair Campbell, over interviews and policy pronouncements by ministers.

Ministers have been in-

structed to co-ordinate all policy pronouncements through Powell; requests for interviews with ministers will be cleared through Campbell; and Mandelson — described by *The Daily Telegraph* as the "black-necked bear" (a reference to Stalin's feared security boss) — of seeing that Blair's programme is implemented throughout Whitehall.

One journalist who was certainly not surprised was Joe Haines, who had two stints as Harold Wilson's press secretary. He adopted exactly the same policy as Blair and Campbell, and scorned the idea that it was "unprecedented". Under Haines, ministers were not allowed to appear on *Question Time* or *Any Questions* and one was even sacked for publishing a book on the grounds that he ought not to have had the time to write it.

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THE TIMES TODAY

WEDNESDAY MAY 7 1997

NEWS

Brown surrenders power to Bank

Gordon Brown surrendered the power to set interest rates to the Bank of England yesterday in a daring move demonstrating Labour's determination to be tough on inflation.

The Chancellor announced one of the biggest changes in economic policy-making this century moments after raising the base rate a quarter point to 6.25 per cent. He said that future decisions were to be taken out of politicians' hands to prevent them seeking short-term popularity with voters. Page 1

Acrimony as Hague seeks leadership

William Hague will enter the Tory leadership race today after pulling out of a pact with Michael Howard under which he would have run as Mr Howard's deputy. His move provoked an outbreak of acrimony at the top of the party only four days after John Major stood down. Page 1

Credit to Kiwis

Labour plans for the Bank of England's future have been modelled on the highly successful 1989 reform of the New Zealand Reserve Bank. Page 1

Death driver

For the first time in American history a man in North Carolina was facing the prospect of the death penalty for drunken driving. Thomas Jones, 39, was convicted of first degree murder in the death of two students. Page 1

Licensed to kick

Lady Victoria Ridsdale, 75, who was the inspiration for Ian Fleming's Miss Moneypenny, sent a rubber fleeing with a well-placed kick to the groin, a court was told. Page 3

Birds poisoned

Pesticides are almost certainly the chief cause of a sharp decline over 25 years in the numbers of at least 12 varieties of farmland birds, according to a report. Page 5

Novel Americans

Four of the six novels on the shortlist for the Orange Prize for Fiction, Britain's most lucrative literary prize, are by North American writers. Page 6

House room

Almost 250 first-time MPs embarked on the business of finding their bearings and some office space in the Palace of Westminster. Page 9

Beetles munch into the Everglades

Squadrons of snout beetles have been airlifted to the Everglades, America's largest swamp, in a desperate attempt to stop the Australian Melaleuca tree from wiping out hundreds of species of local plants and insects. The tree, introduced at the turn of the century, has ruined the area's ecological balance. Snout beetles eat only them. Page 15



Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, takes a picture of the Prince of Wales during a visit to Carrickfergus yesterday

BUSINESS

Interest rates: Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, raised interest rates by a quarter of a point to 6.25 per cent, but said future decisions would be taken independently by the Bank of England. Page 25

Publishing: Reed Elsevier, the Anglo-Dutch publishing group, has recruited Microsoft to accelerate its move into global electronic distribution. Page 25

Pro Europe: Unilever defended itself against charges that it was too eager to comply with the EU Social Chapter. Page 25

Markets: The FT-SE 100 index rose 63.7 points to close at 4519.3. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 99.7 to 100.6 after a rise from \$1,618 to \$1,636.8 and from DM2,796 to DM2,820. Page 28

SPORT

Football: Clubs in the Nationwide League were warned that many of them could disappear if the recommendations of independent consultants about the league's structure are ignored. Page 48

Cricket: After two opening defeats, Lancashire remained in contention for a place in the quarter-finals of the Benson and Hedges Cup with a 35-run win over Minor Counties. Page 45

Rugby union: Dean Richards, the Leicester club captain, will start the Pilkington Cup final against Sale among the replacements. Martin Johnson leads the side. Page 44

Golf: The Badminton Horse Trials may unlock fame for Blyth Tait, the New Zealander who is still striving for recognition. Page 44

ARTS

Hot tickets: From Kathleen Turner at Chichester and the blockbuster Disney musical *Beauty and the Beast* in the West End, to Montserrat at the Tate and Plácido Domingo at Covent Garden — Times critics select the best shows of the summer. Page 33

Pop historian: Beck proves himself to be a master of past genres in a memorable gig in the courtyard of Dublin Castle. Page 34

Happy anniversary: Siobhan Davies celebrates 25 years as one of Britain's leading choreographers with a season of work. Page 35

Shining through: David Helfgott of *Shine* fame may not have impressed by his discipline, but the London audience was mesmerised by his personality. Page 35



IN THE TIMES

FILMS: Geoff Brown enjoys seeing Prague through Czech eyes in the enchanting *Kolya*.

BOOKS: Monkey business: Alain de Botton praises the controversial Will Self's *Great Apes*

Preview: Spike Milligan and others recall the glory of the GPO's *Heroes of Comedy* (Channel 4, 9pm). Review: Matthew Bond on a lesbian drama cynically compromised. Page 47

Credibility in the Bank

If a Labour Chancellor does not trust himself — or does not expect the markets to trust him — to run the economy prudently, he is right to look for a prop. An independent Bank of England is a far superior prop than membership of EMU

— Page 19

The gold conference

As the Nazi gold issue has demonstrated, it is all too easy to take bureaucratic policy decisions that wholly ignore the need for justice to victims. Page 19

An orange read

Prizes do not dictate. Prizes draw attention, prizes suggest what might — out of what is now more than 100,000 books published in this country in a year — delight a bookshop browser. Page 19

SIMON JENKINS

Tony Blair finds himself head of the most dominant executive in the Western world. He need fear no constitutional check on his powers, no balancing legislature or supreme court. Page 19

ANATOLE KALETSKY

The more I think about it, the more Mr Brown's sudden announcement reminds me of John Major's equally unexpected and "inversible" decision to join the exchange-rate mechanism. Page 18

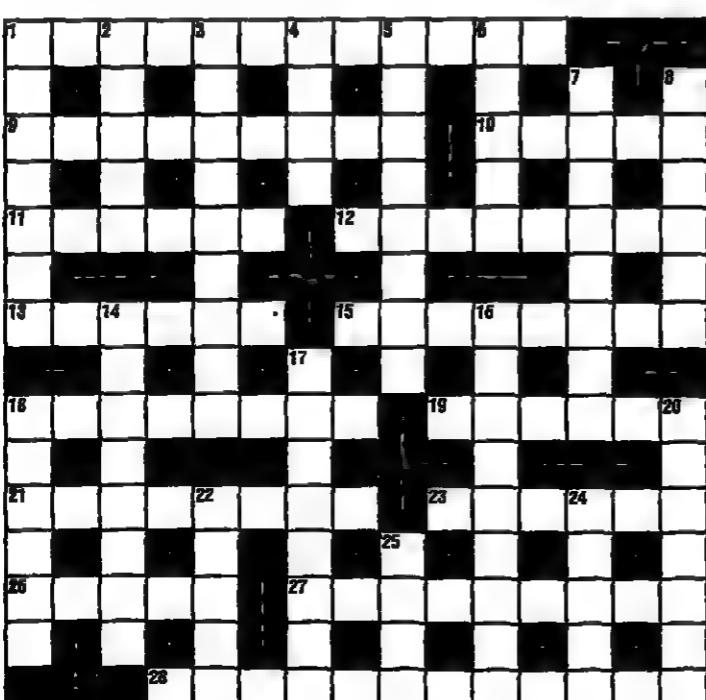
MICHAEL HENDERSON

A cautionary tale is unfolding at Derby, and it is dreadfully familiar to everybody except the man whose story it tells. In its current role of Little Boy Blue, Dominic Cork seems perplexed. Page 44

Brigadier Michael Harbottle, soldier, writer and broadcaster; Linie Vanista, jeweller designer; James Ross, president, the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. Page 21

Labour on tax and interest rates; Tory leadership; town centre cinemas versus out of town leisure complexes; Leo Blair on Lord Taylor of Gosforth. Page 19

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,473



ACROSS

1 Forewarning tender sort of appeal may take follows in (12).
 9 Fellowship occurring frequently around university (9).
 10 Money put back in wee purse (5).
 11 Recalled song about army squad (6).
 12 Reasonable way to gain speed (8).
 13 Be left in mother's control? On the contrary (6).
 15 US comrade without love is one who told tale on journey (8).
 18 Minor piece knight, in fork to get queen (3).
 19 A team's digressions (6).
 21 Leave the country and greet "am" in resort (8).
 23 Ill-humour observed outside restricted place (6).
 26 Inexperienced candidate unlikely to gain a constituency? (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,472

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COLONIAL FA
COLLATERAL MOPE
SET OUT IT
WEARIEST RETAIN
A R G I T Y
SPIN H ANDICAP
H C M G G N T
BOHEMIAN TWE
S N E O H
MERING SAFIEN
C N R H E S
TUBA CLEANSWEEP
T P A A U I D
ESTINED FOMPOM

27 Inn — treat possibly for one to shelter in? (9).
 28 Character more honest, we hear, who adds something to the post? (6).

DOWN

1 Fighter on horseback is sanctimonious rogue gaining gold (7).
 2 See me burrowing into English mount — a hill-warrior (5).
 3 Knowledge gained by studying game in book (9).
 4 Go wrong and hallucinate (4).
 5 Like two fighters with swords being blunt? (3-2-3).
 6 Courage shown by king in uniform after uprising (5).
 7 Hurried swallowing water, being injured (8).
 8 Small rock's oxygen absorbed by measuring device (6).
 14 Tile-maker in factory almost completely lazy (8).
 16 Papa rides out to sink without trace (9).
 17 About to put on severe limit (8).
 18 Vehicle on snow needs endless dexterity (6).
 20 Politician has name in constituency for getting nothing right (7).
 22 First item removed from fruit selection (5).
 24 Faithful old lover put on performance (5).
 25 What sounds like colleague's support (4).

Times Two Crossword, page 48

AA INFORMATION

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its foundation
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a noise
patrol about
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comes to terms
with new status
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RADIO
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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY MAY 7 1997

Shares, sterling and gilts soar on early base rate rise and monetary shake-up

Markets welcome Brown's first moves

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

GORDON BROWN'S radical plan to overhaul the Bank of England was greeted with enthusiasm by the City yesterday, which sent the stock market and the pound to new highs.

Mr Brown, who coupled the Bank reform with a quarter-point rise in interest rates to 6.25 per cent, surprised the City with the speed and scope of his plans. Mortgage rates instantly rose, with some building societies putting up the cost by more than Mr Brown's quarter per cent.

Traders said Mr Brown had made a good start in proving himself an "iron Chancellor" and dispelling Labour's trade-

as a "long overdue change that takes to a logical conclusion the tentative steps made since 1992." But Andrew Sentance, director of the Centre for Economic Forecasting at the London Business School and a former member of the Treasury's Panel of Independent Advisers, gave warning that the Bank of England will face a tough task in determining interest rate policy over the next two years and that much will hinge on the quality of economic advice the Bank receives from the independent members of its monetary policy committee.

Business organisations also largely welcomed both the rate rise and the reforms. The Confederation of British Industry said the changes would enhance the credibility of the UK's monetary policy and lower the cost of finance for industry by reducing the risk premium in UK interest rates.

Gilts enjoyed the biggest one-day rally for five years with June gilts climbing 2½ to close at 113½. Mr Brown's decision to raise rates was also supported by economic data published yesterday which showed the money supply and service sector growing strongly. M0, the measure of narrow money supply, grew at 6.4 per cent in April, compared with 6 per cent the previous month, although it remains above 0.4 per cent monitoring range.

THE Halifax, Abbey National, Cheltenham & Gloucester and Northern Rock raised their standard mortgage rates by between 0.31 per cent and 0.38 per cent. Other lenders are expected to follow. The rises takes effect immediately for new borrowers and from June 1 for existing borrowers. The Halifax said the rise would add an extra £13.26 to the monthly mortgage bill for a homeowner with a £50,000 interest-only loan.

national reputation as a tax and spend Government.

The FTSE 100 cleared 4,500 for the first time, closing up 67.3 at 4,519.3, although trading was relatively light. But traders said there is still some nervousness about the contents of Labour's mini-budget, planned for July.

The pound also touched a post-ERM high against the mark, climbing 2½ pence to close at DM2.8202. Sterling's trade weighted index rose nearly a point to 100.4, while the pound gained nearly two cents to finish at \$1.6368. But some analysts said the pound could fall back after Mr Brown's comments that he wanted a "stable and competitive" pound in the medium term.

The outlook for sterling was further clouded after Eddie George, the Governor of the Bank of England, said yesterday that he felt the current level of sterling is "uncomfortable". He added that he felt it "unlikely the pound would be sustained at these levels in the medium term — although the Bank does not make forecasts on the exchange rate." Mr George has been widely perceived by the markets as being unconcerned about the current soaring pound.

Economists predicted the reforms would be likely to limit further interest rate rises this year, with many forecasting that rates will only rise another quarter point. John Sheppard, UK economist at Yamaichi, described the move



Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, yesterday after announcing the rise in interest rates and his plans for radical reform at the Bank of England

Bank of England to be independent

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

THE Bank of England is to gain operational independence in what Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, described as the most radical reform of the Bank's structure in its 300-year history.

The Government will continue to set inflation policy targets, but responsibility for changing interest rates will be handed to a reformed Bank of England. Mr Brown said he wanted to "remove the suspicion that short-term influences are setting interest rates" and

create a system that is "effective, open and accountable". Mr Brown aims to improve the quality of decision-making at the Bank by appointing four outside members to the Bank's monetary policy committee.

The new members, who are expected to be drawn from the City and academia, will be appointed for three-year terms as full-time Bank employees.

The Chancellor plans to appoint a second Deputy Governor for a five-year term. Responsibility for monetary

policy and supervision is to be split between the two deputies.

Mr Brown stopped short of fully dividing the Bank's supervisory and monetary policy roles, but said he would undertake further reforms of supervision in the near future.

The Bank's reformed monetary policy committee will meet once a month and set interest rate by majority vote.

Minutes of the meetings, and voting records, will be published six weeks in arrears.

The Chancellor also said he

would expand the Court, the Bank's governing body, to include 16 non-executives "representative of the whole of the United Kingdom". Four new non-executives, drawn from industry, commerce and finance, are to be appointed shortly.

The powers of scrutiny of the House of Commons Treasury Select Committee will be increased.

The Bank will also lose its debt-management responsibilities which will be transferred to the Treasury to

ensure there is no conflict of interest during gilt auctions.

Gavyn Davies, chief international economist at Goldman Sachs, has been widely tipped for Deputy Governor. Bridget Rosewell, director of Business Strategies and Richard Layard, a professor at the London School of Economics, are possible appointees to the monetary policy committee.

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BUSINESS
TODAY

STOCK MARKET
INDICES

FTSE 100 4619.3 (-63.7)
Yield 3.55%
FTSE All share 2167.92 (-25.01)
Index 2078.92 (-65.17)
New York 7240.58 (+28.09)*
Dow Jones 830.04 (+0.20)*

S&P Composite 100.8 (-0.20)*

US RATE

Federal Funds 5.00%* (5.50%)
Long Bond 95.10%* (95.50%)
Yield 6.89%* (6.50%)

LONDON MONEY

3m Interbank 6.74%* (6.74%)
Libor long gilt future (Jun) 113.75* (111.50)

STERLING

New York 1.6380* (1.6220)

London 1.6365 (1.6182)

S 1.6379 (2.3710)

DM 1.6185 (9.4302)

FF 1.4861 (2.3824)

Yen 205.24 (205.07)

E Index 100.8 (99.7)

SASSI DOLLAR

London 1.7222* (1.7225)

DM 5.8118* (5.8320)

FF 1.4815* (1.4712)

Yen 125.65* (126.62)

Tokyo close Yen 125.86

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Jul) \$18.20 (\$18.15)

GOLD

London close \$342.85 (\$340.20)

* denotes midday trading price

Microsoft and Reed Elsevier in venture

By ERIC REGULY

REED Elsevier, the Anglo-Dutch publishing group, has recruited Microsoft, the world's largest software company, to accelerate its move into global electronic distribution.

Microsoft will provide Reed with the technology to allow Reed's customers to access and manage content on computer platforms. As part of the deal, Reed will use Microsoft Commercial Internet Systems, a portfolio of commercial Internet services, to put scientific, legal, business and travel information on Internet sites.

Among other services, this will allow Reed to form information "communities", allowing lawyers, for example, to share legal information and talk to each other.

Nigel Stapleton, Reed's chairman, said: "By entering into wide-ranging strategic relationship with Microsoft, we expect to deliver state-of-the-art electronic information products to our customers in a more timely and efficient manner."

Reed will pay Microsoft \$30 million over five years. Bernard Vergnes, president of Microsoft Europe, called the payment "fairly insignificant" because the deal is only the start of an alliance with the potential to expand greatly as new content and technology becomes available.

Microsoft recently agreed to help Dow Jones, the publishing company that owns *The Wall Street Journal*, to upgrade Telerate, its ailing financial information service.

Tempus, page 28

Capital Radio to pay £65m for Virgin rival

By ERIC REGULY



CAPITAL RADIO eliminated one of its main competitors yesterday with an agreement to buy Richard Branson's Virgin Radio for £65 million.

Capital is to fund the acquisition by issuing 11.9 million Capital shares at 54p to the Virgin Group. It is also taking on Virgin Radio's £22 million of debt, raising the total value of the deal to £87 million. Capital shares fell 6p to 53p.

Virgin will own 14 per cent of Capital and Mr Branson will become a non-executive director. This is the first time

that he has been a director of a public company since the Virgin Group, now privately owned, was floated in the 1980s.

A Virgin spokesman said: "Richard agreed to become a director because he is committed to remaining a shareholder of Capital."

The Virgin Radio acquisition

will allow Capital to

consolidate its position as the

country's largest commercial broadcaster and the dominant force in the London market, where it owns Capital FM and Capital Gold. The addition of Virgin FM in London will raise Capital's share of the total London audience from about 23 per cent to about 27 per cent.

The City believes that Capital

is falling market share, the result of intense competition from Virgin FM and Heart FM, was behind the deal. Paul Richards, an analyst at Panmure Gordon, said: "Capital appears to be buying back market share that it has lost."

Virgin Radio, launched four years ago, consists of the Virgin FM London licence and the Virgin AM national licence.

Richard Eyre, Capital's managing director, said that owning the AM licence will allow it to enter the digital audio broadcasting market quickly. Only national

licences have been given guaranteed space on the "multiplexes" — the blocks of frequencies assigned to digital broadcasters — that are to be created next year.

Capital reported pre-tax profits of £17 million, up 9 per cent in the half-year to March 31. The interim dividend rises 7.5 per cent, to 4.3p.

Digital sound era, page 29

Unilever defends its social chapter stance

By OLIVER AUGUST
AND PHILIP BASSETT

UNILEVER has defended its pro-European stance against shareholder charges that the Anglo-Dutch group is too eager to comply with the EU's social chapter.

Niall Fitzgerald, chairman, yesterday said that British companies had no reason to fear the changes associated with Labour's plans to abandon the British opt-out. He told the annual meeting of Unilever shareholders: "The social chapter is unjustly being used as a proxy for all undesirable Continental social habits."

In a separate move, the Confederation of British Industry signalled its willingness to work with trade unions on dealing with new proposals from Brussels on European social legislation.

Adair Turner, Director-General of the CBI, also suggested that business would be able to accept a specific mini-

mum wage figure, saying that business could live with an hourly minimum wage of £3.

Unilever has already accepted the social chapter for its UK businesses, guaranteeing them the same treatment as its operations in the rest of Europe.

Mr Fitzgerald said that, so far, there had only been two changes as a result if this —

"Intense dialogue", page 26

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CBI chief sees 'intense' dialogue with Labour

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BUSINESS is likely to have a more intense dialogue with the new Labour Government than it did with the Conservatives, the head of the Confederation of British Industry said yesterday as he expressed his confidence that Labour in government will maintain its pro-business stance.

Speaking to *The Times* about business working with Labour, and business priorities for the Government, Adair Turner, Director-General of the CBI, said: "We can see there will

need to be a very intense dialogue — in some respects more than with the Conservatives."

Mr Turner was careful to praise Conservative achievements, including ending penal rates of taxation, the reactivation of an entrepreneurial spirit and trade union reform, as well as more recent successes, including macro-economic stability. He lauded Kenneth Clarke as "a very good Chancellor overall", but said, too, that he believed that Gordon Brown, the new Chancellor, would "build on" Mr Clarke's achievements to maintain economic stability.

Mr Turner said: "We feel that there is a Government which has a broadly pro-business

point of view." He said that he felt "fairly confident" that Labour would maintain that pro-business position in government.

Although the CBI still opposes key Labour policies such as signing the European social chapter and introducing a national minimum wage, Mr Turner made clear that it would work with Labour to implement them in ways that offered the best advantages to business.

On the social chapter, he held out the prospect of the CBI working with the TUC to coordinate their positions ahead of Brussels making new moves on employment law. On the minimum wage, Mr Turner, for the first time,

put a figure on what might be acceptable to business by agreeing with an independent analysis published yesterday suggesting that the minimum could be as low as £3 an hour.

He confirmed that the CBI would be willing to serve on Labour's planned Low Pay Commission, to recommend a minimum wage level, and on its proposed task force on completion of the European single market.

Business' priorities for the Government included, he said, maintaining macro-economic stability and making sure that any changes such as a minimum wage were introduced in ways that did not harm flexibility or competitiveness.

Lloyd's may collect only half £600m names' debt

By JON ASHWORTH

LLOYD'S of London has conceded that it will be lucky to recover half the £600 million in outstanding debt owed by names around the world.

More than 1,300 writs have been issued with a view to squeezing funds out of non-payers, but recoveries may prove disappointing.

The admission came as Lloyd's published its annual report for 1996, disclosing that lawyers and accountants were paid £24 million last year for their work on the reconstruction and renewal programme.

Total operating costs at the Corporation of Lloyd's came to £222 million, of which £42 million

was directly attributable to reconstruction and renewal. A further £68 million was incurred in connection with Equitas, set up to reinsurance 1992 and prior-year losses. The cost was borne by Equitas premiums paid by members.

The Corporation saw its deficit for the year deepen from £13.8 million in 1995 to £484 million in 1996 — effectively the Corporation's contribution to reconstruction and renewal.

Various fund-raising measures included the sale of Lloyd's of London Press, the sale-and-leaseback of the 1986 Lloyd's building, and the mortgaging of the 1958 building. The council sanctioned a £300 million syndicated loan, repayable over five years, on which £7.5 million in interest has been paid.

Losses on the Corporation's core activities deepened to £10 million (£4.5 million). Bob Hewes, finance director, said some of the expenditure would fall away as the number of resigning names diminished, and legal costs associated with debt recoveries were reduced.

A modest surplus was budgeted for 1997.

Sir David Rowland, chairman, was the highest paid council member in 1996, receiving a non-pensionable salary of £430,000 and £18,000 in benefits, topped up with a £40,000 bonus.

Ron Sandler, the chief executive officer, saw his salary increased to £350,000 (£250,000), and received £12,500 in bonuses. He was given £87,500 (£62,500) towards his pension, and received £9,500 in benefits.

Between 50 and 60 employees across all levels received bonuses worth between £5,000 and £75,000 for their work on reconstruction and renewal.

The appeal in the so-called Clementson case, in which names alleged breaches of articles of the Treaty of Rome with respect to the Lloyd's Central Fund, was dismissed yesterday, when the plaintiffs failed to lodge a security for costs of £500,000. The order for costs was made by the Court of Appeal on March 25.

European chief quits at GGT

By JASON NISSE

GGT Group, the advertising agency, was yesterday dealt a blow only weeks after completing the £96 million purchase of BDDP when Jan Hall, GGT's European chief, unexpectedly resigned.

Ms Hall has been with GGT three years and will leave next month. Along with Mike Greenlee, chairman of GGT, and Mark Baylis, finance director, she masterminded the purchase of BDDP, which more than doubled the size of the group.

It is understood that Ms Hall's role in the group was reduced because of the increased role of Jean-Marie Dru, chairman of BDDP. Ms Hall, who earned more than £200,000 last year, is in talks about compensation.

The takeover has been dogged by defections from BDDP, the latest being the departure of Natalie Rastoin to Ogilvy & Mather.

Ms Hall's departure was announced after the markets closed.



A dispute over the late delivery of Le Shuttle rolling stock is likely to be settled for less than £100 million

Eurotunnel £1bn claim 'cut'

By JASON NISSE

EUROTUNNEL may have to settle for less than one tenth of the £1 billion it claimed from Trans Manche Line, the builders of the tunnel, for late delivery of Le Shuttle rolling stock, after a mixed decision in a ruling over the claim.

The Panel of Experts, which rules on disputes between Eurotunnel and TML, said

TML has to pay damages for the late delivery. But the Panel said TML did not have to compensate Eurotunnel for loss of revenue.

The trains and carriages, built by a consortium including Bombardier, Fiat and British Rail Engineering, cost Eurotunnel £700 million and were delivered between six and 12 months late, partly because of extra safety checks.

Eurotunnel said two years ago that it was suing for £1 billion in compensation. Yesterday it said it may press for further legal arbitration.

However, talks with the ten-strong TML consortium, which includes Tarmac, Taylor Woodrow and SNCF, the French railways, were dropped last year. Details of Eurotunnel's third debt restructuring are expected in the next fortnight.

It is expected the final payment will be under £100 million, spread between TML and the manufacturers. The £1 billion claim was trumpeted by Sir Alastair Morton, former Eurotunnel chairman, as one of the saviours of the debt-ridden group. A £2.5 billion claim against British Rail and SNCF, the French railways, was dropped last year. Details of Eurotunnel's third debt restructuring are expected in the next fortnight.

Norwich sets dealing date

By MARIANNE CURPHAY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

DEALING in Norwich will begin on June 16, bringing to an end 200 years of mutuality. It was announced yesterday.

More than 2.9 million qualifying members will have the opportunity to trade in 1.3 billion free shares on that date, Norwich Union said.

They stand to gain an average of 300 to 400 shares worth between 220p and 265p, with an initial estimated value of between £660 and £1,060.

Early valuations put a tag of

£5 billion on the company. A revised forecast of the flotation price will be included in a mini-prospectus to be sent to members on May 21. That date will also mark the beginning of a book-building exercise for institutions. They will be offered a proportion of the £1.75 billion of new shares. Of this £1.5 billion will be paid into the with-profit fund of NUI's main UK life company.

About 1.8 million with-profit policyholders will net an average of £800 worth of free

shares. They will receive a minimum of 300 shares with additional shares based on the value and duration of their policies as at October 1, 1996.

A further million non-profit policyholders will receive a fixed allocation of 150 shares worth between £30 and £400.

Members need to return their application forms with payment by June 10. The minimum application for members is £400 and the maximum £100,000. The minimum for non-members is £1,000.

The settlement means that all allegations of impropriety made against Mr Duval have been withdrawn.

Although the professional indemnity insurers to Amhurst Brown Colombotti are expected to bear part of the cost of settlement, Mr Duval will also have to find substantial sums.

The dispute centred on a block of flats in Bournemouth. Mr Duval, through one of his numerous companies, acquired a half-share in this property in September 1988. Planning permission was refused a few months later, and the stake in the property was sold again to Mr Rowe's pension fund, whose trustees include Mr Duval.

This move, made just at the start of the recession, lost several hundred thousand pounds for Mr Rowe's pension fund.

City Diary, page 29

Shell fails to meet standards

SHELL, the Anglo-Dutch oil company facing a challenge from environmental activists at its forthcoming annual meeting, is failing to comply with environmental legislation in Nigeria.

Shell's Health, Safety and Environment Report, published today, reveals the company has yet to comply with recent legislation introduced in Nigeria which introduces standards comparable to those in the USA.

The oil company states that it is working to renew ageing facilities and to bury flowlines, most of which date from the 1960s and 1970s.

Shell faces a financial problem in Nigeria which is hindering progress towards compliance as its joint venture partner, the state oil company, has been denied sufficient government funds to meet agreed budgets. Shell said yesterday that two other developing countries, Venezuela and Egypt were expected soon to adopt US environmental standards.

It

CANTAB PHARMACEUTICALS, the biotech company that develops products for the treatment of infectious diseases and cancer, earned pre-tax profits of £1.38 million in the three months to March 31 (£1.18 million loss). Revenues of £5.38 million (£1.70 million) included a £5 million licence fee from Glaxo Wellcome. The companies are working to develop Cantab's DisCHSV technology for genital herpes. Earnings were 0.21p a share (0.17p loss). The shares were unchanged at 932.5p.

Birmingham City profit

THE sale of Gary Breen, the Republic of Ireland international defender, to Coventry City, the Premiership football club, for £1.4 million, helped Birmingham City to a £2.7 million profit in the six months to February 28, the first figures the First Division club has released since it joined the AIM. This compares with a £1.87 million loss last time for the last financial year. There is no interim dividend. The club expects to use the £7.5 million proceeds of its flotation to buy new players.

Cantab in the black

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ST 41

By PAUL DURMAN

THE senior West End lawyer who is one of the closest advisers to Paul Raymond, the property and sex industry tycoon, has agreed to pay more than £1 million to settle a legal action in which he was accused of a client's pension fund.

Mark Duval, a senior partner at the St James's firm of Amhurst Brown Colombotti, will have to find about

£475,000 for Henry Rowe, his former client and friend. He will also have to pay a share of the legal costs, which could reach £2 million, according to one prospective witness.

Mr Duval is a director of the Paul Raymond Organisation and a trustee of the trusts that control the £350 million empire, whose interests range from soft pornography to central London property. Along with Carl Sinchler, Mr Duval is one of the closest

advisers to the 71-year-old Mr Raymond.

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City Diary, page 29

□ Jobs for all in Threadneedle Street □ Sainsbury counts the cost □ Capital idea for Virgin

□ NO ONE was more delighted than Eddie George, it seems, to discover on Monday morning that the Bank of England's carefully prepared contingency plans for a Labour Government were not what was needed. The post-election version of Labour policy allows the Bank's new monetary committee to dispose of interest rate initiatives and not just propose them.

Financial markets were almost as delighted as the Governor. The fear of greater short-term pain, now that political anaesthesia has been withdrawn, was judged to be less than the potential pleasure of a cut in long-term interest rates.

Once the 'understandable euphoria' subsides, the problems of change will come more into focus. Industry and its stakeholders will realise that Gordon Brown's daring, if pragmatic, reform will have much in common with monetary union.

To the extent that any official hand influences the foreign exchanges, the Bank's monetary committee will control the level of sterling as well as determining interest rates. That may prove uncomfortable if early decisions err on the side of caution to make sure the Bank meets its inflation targets. Sure, the Bank will have

some responsibility for exchange rates and employment. But it will be like the blurred background of a holiday snap.

Personalities will determine how cautious policy becomes and few of them are known. There is Steady Eddie himself, the Montgolfier of interest rates. But he will have a new deputy looking over his monetary shoulder who is more likely to be Gavyn Davies than Howard, who seems set for regulation.

Behind them and Mervyn King, the once free-thinking economist who has taken on deep Bank colouring, will lie a new syndicalist Court of all the interests, judging the executives' performance from their own perspectives. Mr Brown should be able to choose a near-majority of these within ten months.

Alongside the Bank's executive will be the new breed of monetary commissioners. They will each have a vote that counts, which makes the job more important than it was under Labour's pre-election plan. Be-

yond that, the likely candidates and their day-to-day role are, to be generous, sketchy.

In America and Germany, such folk come from regional state banks. In the UK version, it is not yet certain whether they will have offices, secretaries or computer terminals, let alone whether they will be paid enough to attract anyone but academics, the only breed likely to be able to continue an outside job.

Most of all, Bank and Treasury will be terrified of the committee leaking, as committees tend to do. The Millennium nightmare will be a repeat of the 1990s Bank Rate tribunal.

No reward at the checkout

□ WHAT is the price of loyalty? At J Sainsbury, the answer has recently been disconcertingly high. Today, as the company reports dismal, but sensibly foreshadowed, profits, its main task will be to convince the City that it

PENNINGTON



is no longer being forced to pay painfully to win back the business that was spirited away by slicker competitors.

Hoover amply demonstrated the folly of buying short-term sales growth with largesse. Far from building loyalty to the brand, that free-flights fiasco caused unquantifiable damage to the company image.

Sainsbury's scheme of encouraging customers to splurge by offering bountiful bonus points to be credited to its Reward loyalty card is not in the same league of ludicrous generosity, but nonetheless has been costing the company more

in margin loss than it has been winning in profits. Increasingly, sophisticated customers know a bargain when they see one and they have, apparently, been happy to take advantage of those on offer at Sainsbury's.

Will they continue spending when the special offers become less special? Although David Sainsbury is expected to make much today of his sales growth figures, they will not provide the answer to that crucial question.

Unfortunately, what they will show is that arch rival Tesco is continuing to grow its like-for-like sales at a considerably faster rate, in spite of the Sainsbury promotions.

Sainsbury is not a basket case by any means, but it has stumbled badly, as profits down well over £100 million to about £650 million demonstrate. Those who have lost most from its fall have been the Sainsbury family, who have seen their fortune severely diminished by the stock's performance. The City should be wary of helping to rebuild that fortune

without strong evidence that the group has found a way to retain customer loyalty without paying a pointless premium.

Branson calling

□ EVEN if he professes disdain for its output, Richard Eyre's decision to buy Virgin Radio has more obvious commercial logic than his recent move into catering. Accumulating a tighter hold on London's advertising airwaves will improve Capital's sales effectiveness; Virgin had been a noisy, if not particularly successful competitor.

The two London stations will retain their separate identities, we are told, but we can expect them to co-operate rather than compete. When such strategies are mooted in the airline industry, Mr Branson has been known to get a little hot under the open-necked shirt, but flexibility is a sensible characteristic for a successful

entrepreneur. For Capital, the deal represents a reasonably priced way into winning the national licence it has been keen to acquire. With Radio One's listening figures plummeting in the absence of the razzous Chris Evans, there is room for a serious contender to win the hearts and spending power, of youthful listeners.

The deal also brings Capital, and Richard Eyre, the unquantifiable benefit of Mr Branson as a major shareholder and a non-executive director.

Quite how he will perform will be fascinating to see. The bearded balloonist has not previously given indications of being fully in sympathy with current boardroom etiquette.

Bank notes

□ NO doubt emissaries of the solicitors Norton Rose are by now engrossed in their inquiries into how Hambros Bank conducted itself in the infamous Lanica affair. But there is some scepticism as to how far up the hierarchy of the bank's inquiries might need to progress. City solicitors and merchant banks are not unknown to each other, and Norton Rose and Hambros are far from being strangers.

Ryanair on course to float

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

RYANAIR, the Irish airline, is planning to seek a listing for its shares on the Irish stock exchange and a Nasdaq quotation in New York through an offering of 54.2 million shares, the company said.

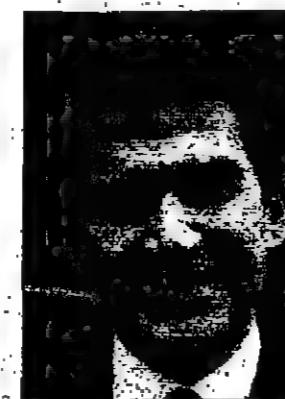
The offer price is expected to be between 1965p and 1975p a share, valuing the company at between £261.2 million and £268.7 million.

Currently, 62 per cent of Ryanair is owned by the family of Tony Ryan, its founder, 20 per cent by David Boudierman, the chairman, and the remaining 18 per cent by other top management. A mid-range price for the shares of 1980p would value the Ryan family's stake at about £175 million.

The flotation will consist of an offer of shares to investors in Ireland, a public offer in America, and offers to professional investors in Britain and continental Europe. A pathfinder prospectus will be published shortly. Dealing in the shares is expected to begin by the end of May.

BP rises to £755m and adds to share of UK gas market

By CARL MORTIMER



Browne: self-help

BRITISH PETROLEUM has sharply increased its share of the UK gas market, helping the oil company to raise its upstream performance and lift profits in the first quarter from £632 million to £755 million.

BP's worldwide oil and gas production was its highest for six years in the first quarter. Gas volumes were up 6 per cent partly because of strong sales in the UK. Worldwide oil sales rose 3 per cent.

BP's gas sales in the UK have benefited from settlement, earlier this year, of the take-or-pay contract dispute with the former British Gas. The deal has enabled BP to sell gas unwarranted but previously contracted to Centrica, the new gas marketing company, in the market.

Rodney Chase, BP's exploration director, said that the company's UK market share has grown to 16 per cent from 12 per cent, two years ago.

John Browne, chief executive, said: 'BP's first-quarter preexceptional profits were a record, up 27 per cent in dollar terms

margins and the remainder from lower costs.

The bulk of the profits gain came from exploration and production, with a rise in replacement cost operating profit to £913 million (£737 million). BP has had little success in new wells in the Atlantic Frontier after initial finds West of Shetlands.

BP said the overall operating environment was more favourable because of the higher oil price. Average realisations were \$21.30 compared with \$18.50 per barrel a year ago. Refining and marketing profits were £179 million (£156 million) on better volumes and unchanged margins. BP said the benefit of the joint venture with Mobil in Europe would not show up in figures until the end of the year.

Net debt was \$6.1 billion at the end of March. Gearing stood at 28 per cent. BP is paying a quarterly dividend of 52.5p a share, the same as last quarter, but up 24 per cent on the previous year.

Tempus, page 28

Court stops Brazilian mine sell-off

THE \$5 billion privatisation of CVRD, the Brazilian state mining group, was halted midway through the bidding yesterday when a court official charged on to Rio de Janeiro's stock exchange floor with an injunction.

Officials of Brazil's National Development Bank said they expected to quash the court order soon and resume the auction.

The halt, which occurred just as the bidding reached a 13.2 per cent premium over the 26.67 reais (about \$25) per share base price, extended a week-long battle between government lawyers and courts.

Wace says £14m revamp has failed to halt decline

BY FRASER NELSON

SHARES in Wace fell a further 45 per cent yesterday as the paper, packaging and printing combine admitted that the £14 million spent on restructuring itself last year has failed to halt the decline in its profits.

The company, which only two months ago issued an upbeat assessment of its prospects, shocked the City by giving warning that its US pre-printing operations were still losing money, with no sign of improvement. Analysts are now expecting the company to lose £10 million in the full year, against previous forecasts of £9 million profit.

The warning was the company's third in 12 months. Mr Puckett said that more bad news is unlikely, but admitted that the company was in no better position to forecast now than it was six months ago.

Peter Brown, chairman of Riverside Press and Dawson Holdings, the printing com-

panies, will this month replace Frans ten Bos, the former Scottish international rugby player, as chairman of Wace.

Analysts suggested that his appointment may put pressure on Trevor Grice, chief executive, who launched the company into a £50 million expenditure programme that continued throughout the downturn. Wace's debt is now heading towards £65 million, and is expected to cost £5 million in interest this year.

Wace shares, which have fallen from 250p in 12 months, slid 33.5p to 41p yesterday.

Tempus, page 28

Bre-X stock collapses as trading resumes

FROM RICHARD THOMSON

IN NEW YORK

SHARES in Bre-X, the disgraced company at the centre of the world's biggest mining fraud, fell sharply after trading resumed on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

The shares, which had once been worth more than C\$280, slumped from C\$3.7 to 6.50 cents, after the announcement by Strathcona Mineral Services, a mining consultancy, that there was no significant amount of gold at the Busang site in Indonesia. Bre-X had claimed the site was the largest gold deposit in the world.

Yesterday was the first chance that investors had to react to the Strathcona report. More than 35.4 million Bre-X shares, about half the exchange's normal overall daily trading volume, changed hands in the first hour, overloading the computer system and forcing another halt in Bre-X trading.

Officials at Nasdaq, the American stock market that also quoted Bre-X shares, have summoned directors of Bre-X to appear at a hearing before the exchange's listing qualifications panel. Trading in Bre-X shares on Nasdaq will remain suspended until a decision has been reached on the legitimacy of the company's claims.

Both Freeport-McMoRan, Bre-X's US partner at Busang, and the Indonesian Government, which had a stake in the mine, are pulling out of the project. Nasumba Group, the Indonesian company involved, is closely linked to President Suharto of Indonesia, who is in the middle of an election campaign.

The debacle is also being investigated by the Ontario Securities Exchange and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's commercial crime unit.

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ACCOUNT TITLE	†GROSS RATE (%)	*NET RATE (%)
BUSINESS PREMIUM ACCOUNT. (Rates also apply to Farmers Premium Account) - instant access.		
£350,000+	3.500	2.800
£100,000 - £249,999	3.375	2.700
£25,000 - £99,999	3.125	2.500
£10,000 - £24,999	2.625	1.100
£100 - £1,999	2.250	1.800
HIGH INTEREST BUSINESS ACCOUNT - 14 days' notice.		
£250,000+	4.875	3.900
£100,000 - £249,999	4.750	3.800
£25,000 - £99,999	4.500	3.800
£10,000 - £24,999	4.000	3.200
£2,000 - £9,999	3.250	2.600
CLIENT'S PREMIUM ACCOUNT		
£1 million+	4.250	3.400
£250,000 - £999,999	4.125	3.300
£100,000 - £249,999	4.000	3.200
£25,000 - £99,999	3.625	2.900
£10,000 - £24,999	3.375	2.700
BARCLAYS COMMUNITY ACCOUNT. (An interest bearing current account for clubs, charities, churches and societies) No minimum balance.		
£25,000+	2.125	1.700
£10,000 - £24,999	1.625	1.300
£5,000 - £9,999	1.125	0.900
£0 - £4,999	0.875	0.700
SEVEN DAY DEPOSIT ACCOUNT. (A seven days' notice account) No minimum balance.		
	0.500	0.400

*GROSS RATE is the commercial rate of interest payable not taking account of the deduction of income tax at the lower rate.

*NET RATE is the rate which would be payable after allowing for the deduction of income tax at the lower rate. The Tax Deduction Scheme for Interest (TDIS) may very well, therefore, the net rate is given as an illustration only. Tax will only be deducted in those cases where the Bank is obliged to do so.

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STOCK MARKET



MICHAEL CLARK

Gilts and shares cheer independence for Bank

INDEPENDENCE DAY for the Bank of England was celebrated in style with the subsequent quarter-point rise in interest rates to 6.25 per cent taking second place.

Government securities led the celebrations with gains of more than £4 at the longer end of the market in the busiest day's trading since Black Wednesday. Share prices also responded positively, breaching 4,500 for the first time, to close at yet another all-time high. The FT-SE 100 Index ended just below its best, but still 63.7 points up at 4,519.3.

Prices were first of all marked sharply higher during the pre-market warm-up to reflect Wall Street's 143-point leap overnight. But everything was put on hold after it was announced that the monetary meeting between Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, and Eddie George, the Governor, had been brought forward 24 hours. An early lead of 40 points was halved, but the market quickly rebounded.

The subsequent rise in rates had already been factored in to the market. However, the move to offer the Bank independence, enabling it to adjust rates as it sees fit came out of the blue and was warmly received.

Richard Jeffrey, head of economic research at Charnierhouse, said: "Everything has been led up by the gilt market which is clearly impressed with this change in the setting of monetary policy and partial independence for the Bank of England".

First-quarter figures from BP exceeded most expectations and the shares responded with a rise of 29p at 732p. Utilities bounced back after Friday's falls, generated by renewed windfall tax fears. National Power rose 9p to 521.5p and United Utilities put on 10p to 668.5p, while BT put on 3p to 400p. Railtrack shed 12p to 124p, worried by John Prescott's decision to take transport under his wing.

Bskyb, 40 per cent owned by News International, owner of *The Times*, rose 28p to 595.5p. The group is expected to announce its digital television tie-up with BT today.

It was a bad day for shareholders of Wace Group as the price plunged 33p to 41p, lopping £2.5 million from the market price of £58.9 million. It follows the printer's third profits warning of the past year with little sign of a pick-



Whitbread led the way in the brewing sector with 21p rise

up. Trading in the US remained poor and the group is expected to report an operating loss for the year.

Superscape VR continued to reel from last month's news of increased losses in the first half, with the price tumbling 22p to 212.5p. During the past two weeks the price has fallen from the 300p level.

Chesterfield Properties

The City last night had ample opportunity to tax Reed International on the proposed \$30 million deal with Microsoft undertaken by its jointly owned company Reed Elsevier. Reed talked to a group of fund managers over dinner at the Savoy Hotel. It was hosted by Henderson Crosthwaite, the broker.

dropped 61p to 608.5p after Robert Maxted, chief executive, slashed the value of some of the group's investments resulting in a drop in the net asset value from 595p to 525p.

The profit takers moved in and wiped 7p off Arion Properties at 22.5p. Only last week the group announced it was pondering the possibility of arranging a reverse takeover.

Vega, the computer and

supplier started life at 122.5p and touched 124.5p before settling at 124p, a premium of 7p.

Buyers were out in force for Whitbread, with the price rising 21p to 789.5p ahead of full-year figures today. Brokers are looking for pre-tax profits to rise from £283.3 million to £320.5 million. But there is also talk it may announce the disposal of certain pubs and off-licences. Merrill

Elsewhere in the sector, fast growing PizzaExpress, retreated 12p to 625.5p as Janus Capital Corporation, its biggest shareholder, sold some more shares in the market reducing its holding from 16.9 per cent to 15.27 per cent, or 10.34 million shares.

GILT-EDGED: It was the busiest day for bond traders since Black Wednesday. The move to offer the Bank of England partial independence sent prices soaring at the longer end by more than 4s. As one broker commented: "The move will protect the market from inflation".

In the futures pit, the June series of the long gilt leapt £2.32 to £113.32 as massive 230,000 contracts were completed, the second highest traded in one day. In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 raced ahead £2.12 to £108.5, while among shorter dated issues Treasury 8 per cent 20000 put on 7s to £103.12.

NEW YORK: The Dow Jones industrial average, bucking profit-taking and a weak bond market, extended gains at midday to reach 7,240.58 points, up 26.09.

SLAKING A THIRST FOR BREWERY SHARES

Source: Datamonitor

May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May

3700
3600
3500
3400
3300
3200
3100
3000

FT-SE breweries, pubs & restaurants price index
FT-SE all-share price index (rebased)

COMMODITIES

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS (Barrel Pd)

Brent Physical 17.80 9.10

Brent 15 Day 18.10 9.20

15 Day 18.00 9.10

Richard Eyre, managing director of Capital Radio, is not fan of Richard Branson's Virgin Radio. "Virgin is rubbish," he said. He doesn't think the former works—the station plays a jarringly mixture of hard-driving rock classics that appeal to young men and old, and easy-listening chart-toppers that would make your mother break into song.

So why is Capital buying Virgin Radio? The acquisition will consolidate Capital's position as the largest commercial radio operator in the country and, more importantly, eliminate a competitor in the London market. Furthermore, Virgin Radio, through Virgin AM, will give Capital its first national licence.

Owning a national licence will speed up Capital's entry into digital audio broadcasting, the next great frontier. Only national radio stations have guaranteed slots on the "multiplexes" — the blocks of frequencies assigned to digital broadcasters — that will be fixed up next year. Digital broadcasting will give unprecedented reception clarity, providing the listeners buy new, and expensive, digital

Virgin deal hastens Capital entry into digital sound era

radios. "Virgin gives us the critical mass to attack the digital market," Syrie said.

Capital is buying marginally profitable Virgin Radio in exchange for £64.7 million in new Capital shares. The Virgin Group, as a result, will own 14 per cent of Capital and Branson will become a non-executive director with an "active interest" in Capital's future, a spokesman said.

The deal was sealed on Saturday. Capital moved quickly. Radio groups are hot properties; if Capital walked, Branson would have had no trouble finding a new suitor.

The Virgin acquisition brings Capital pretty close to the overall market share limit imposed by the Radio Authority. In London, where its share of the total audience will go from

about 23 per cent to about 27 per cent, it will have no room to expand because no radio group is allowed to own more than three licences in any given market. Capital's London portfolio will consist of Capital FM, Capital Gold and Virgin FM. There are another three stations in Birmingham and six in Kent, Hampshire and Sussex.

Shares in Capital dipped after the Virgin Radio deal was announced, but the City was generally pleased by the expansion proposal. At least Capital was sticking to the same industry — its last acquisition turned into a public relations disaster. In November it entered the food chain through the £57 million purchase of My Kinda Town, the restaurant company whose outlets include Hen-

ry J Bean's, the Chicago Pizza Pie Factory and Beach Blanket Babylon. Capital justified the move by arguing that theme restaurants fit its overall strategy of evolving into a music and entertainment group. Investors were less enthusiastic, noting that such restaurants require periodic makeovers to keep them in fashion and that the cross-promotion potential is not obvious. Analysts, noting that a bid premium had crept into Capital's shares, attributed defensive motives to the acquisition.

Given the reaction, Eyre could not risk another diversification move. Capital has grown remarkably well in an industry that was not taken seriously until a few years ago. Capital Radio was launched on October 16, 1973. Growth was slow in

the first years when commercial radio was known as the "2 per cent industry" — no one expected it to capture more than 2 per cent of national advertising revenues.

Growth did not accelerate until the Radio Authority was formed in 1991 with the brief to expand the sector. Classic FM won the first national radio licence in 1992. The 1996 Broadcasting Act gave the industry another boost by lifting the market share limits. There are now some 170 commercial stations and they captured 4.7 per cent of the display advertising market in 1996, up from 2.8 per cent in 1992. Growth is slowing, but Eyre thinks a 6 per cent advertising share can be attained. He thinks Virgin FM can grow as well but only if its format is overhauled.

Under Capital, Virgin FM will become a pure rock station, similar, he said, to the thumping KROC station in New York. The expanding market for ageing male yuppies who think music died with Jimi Hendrix appears to be the target.

ERIC REGULY



ANTHONY HARRIS

Brown opts for the Major road

It is about 30 years since Harold Wilson invited the cream of the financial establishment round to No 10 to toast the FT index, when it passed 400 for the first time. After a struggle, Labour had proved that it was acceptable in the City. It had not, alas, proved that its economic policies were a target.

No struggle this time but

Gordon Brown should not be too quick to celebrate the market's approval of his first act as Chancellor; nor, for that matter, should the City be too quick to approve.

The *modus operandi*, with a broad monetary policy committee, and published minutes, looks good; it is, after all, closely modelled on that of the Fed, the world's most successful central bank.

But the sealed orders are quite different. What is it, as a Tory minister once asked his civil servants, that we are trying to optimise? The Bank of England has been told to set rates to achieve an inflation target set by the Government.

Is that all? Not quite. There is also a phrase about "supporting the general economic policies of the Government". But the order of priority looks clear, all the same at heart: this is the Bundesbank model, where the main duty of the central bank is to guard the value of the currency.

The Fed, by contrast, operates under the Humphrey-Hawkins Act, which lays equal emphasis on inflation, economic growth and employment. The difference matters.

The Fed's broad brief so offended the monetary purists in Chicago that they set up their own Shadow Open Market Committee (SOMC) to say what policy ought to be. Their advice has never changed: interest rates should be raised. The Fed followed its own star. Resilient Alan Greenspan has become a lay saint, while it is long since anyone took the faintest notice of the SOMC.

Now Eddie George and his officials are not doctrinaire monetarists, and the Bank's forecasts for the real economy have often been praised as better than those of the Treasury. Why, then, is that?

have they been sounding like a less extreme version of the SOMC? Because, by their own account, they were asked the wrong question. Not, what is the right level for rates? But, what level of rates will deliver the inflation target? Since an inflation target is not really a target at all, but a ceiling, that was bound to give them a doctrinaire bias.

Will their "independent" operations show the same bias? Let us suppose, charitably, that the Bank has learnt perfect judgment from experience, and that its policies are in some sense optimal; its brief still looks lopsided.

Aha, you may say, but this is Britain, not America. The Fed has to run the economy, because the American budget only emerges after months of horse-trading, and is always quite different from what the Administration proposed in the first place. So it is just about taxes and spending. A British Chancellor, by contrast, has draconian powers, and so can manage the economy. But can he? He can set a course (within the limits of the Treaty, and of his own election pledges).

But when events — in the currency markets, say, or the oil market, or in the European economy — make that course look dangerous, it is hard to change it. So unless Brown intends a series of mini-Budgets (very old Labour, that would be) he may have to look to the Bank to respond, after all, and deliver an optimal policy, not just an inflation target. That was the tunnel vision that let Jo in Major blunder into a recession, which can hardly be the lead Gordon Brown means to follow.

The first Labour government since 1979 has to establish its anti-inflationary credentials, to be sure; and it would also be nice to close the unfaltering gap between gilt yields and those on French and German bonds (the hope that helped to ignite the markets). It would even help the Budget balance, Italian fashion. So this could still prove a good start. If only Brown didn't sound so doormat. And so smug.

Brown's revolution rocks Bank to the foundation

Robert Miller looks at the implications of the new Chancellor's reforms

Gordon Brown, the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, has given City traders and the money markets a dose of what they like best: the smack of firm government.

Within days of taking up the reins at the Treasury, Mr Brown has signalled the most fundamental shake-up of the Bank of England since its foundation nearly 303 years ago.

The City had always assumed, and indeed it was outlined in the Labour Party manifesto, that the new Government would oversee reforms at the Bank.

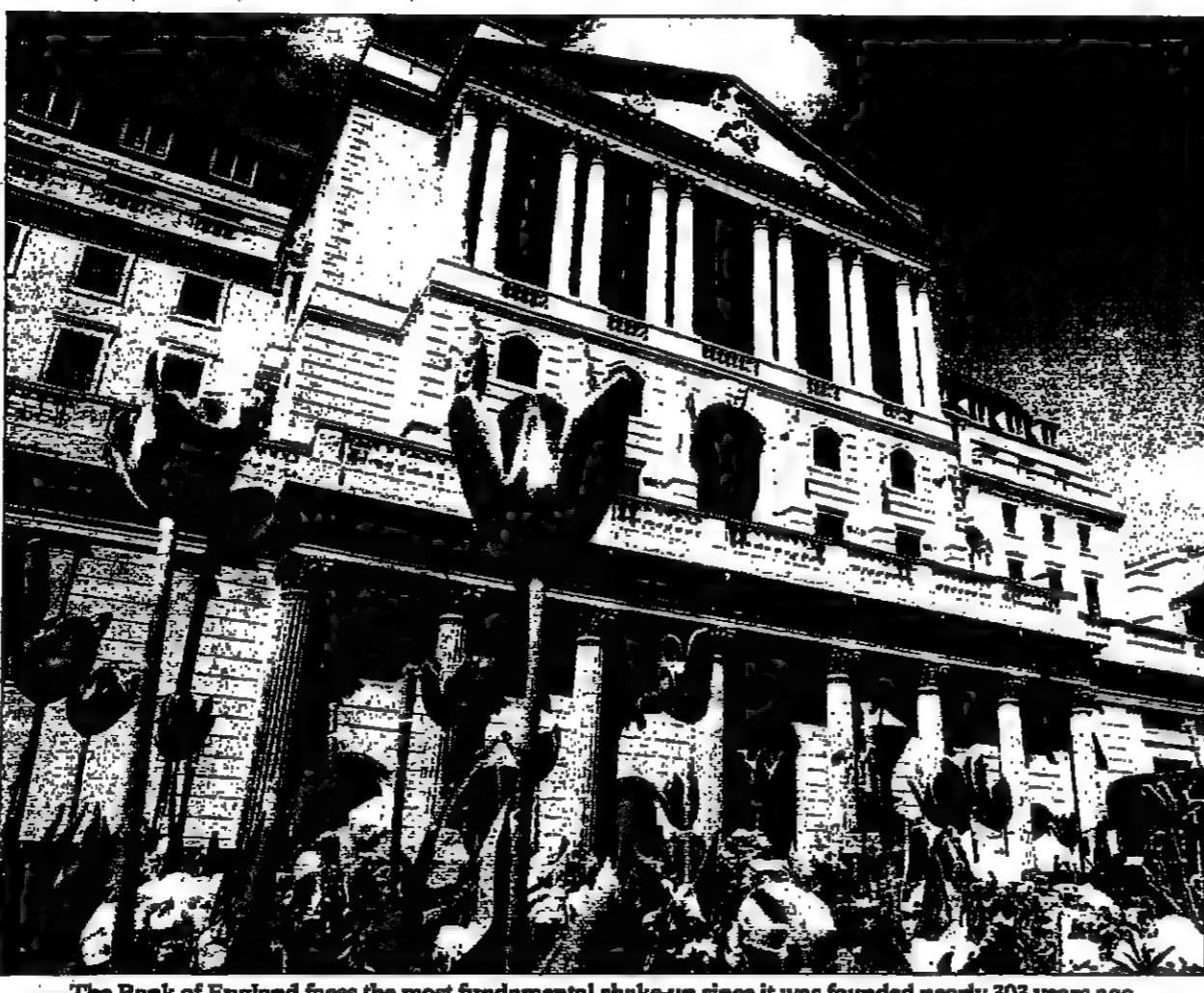
For the record, the manifesto said Labour would "ensure that decision making on monetary policy is more effective, open, accountable, and free from short-term political manipulation."

What was not expected, however, was the speed at which the new Chancellor would act. Without warning, Mr Brown brought forward to yesterday the regular monthly meeting with Eddie George, the Governor. He raised interest rates and then declared it would be the last such meeting.

In future the Bank will call the shots on interest rates. At the same time the Old Lady's internal structure is to be beefed-up, starting at the top with a reform of the Court, the equivalent of a board of directors. Finally, the Bank's role in policing UK banks will also come under close scrutiny.

In a pre-emptive and brilliantly orchestrated manoeuvre yesterday Mr Brown sent a seven-page letter to Eddie George, the Governor of the Bank of England, outlining his radical plans. For good measure the text of the Chancellor's letter was released, illustrating just how much work was done while Labour was in opposition. Nevertheless, the missive still leaves many questions unanswered.

Who, for example, will be the second Deputy Governor alongside Howard Davies and will Mr Davies in future be in



The Bank of England faces the most fundamental shake-up since it was founded nearly 303 years ago

charge of supervising banks rather than working on monetary and interest rate policy?

And who will be the six members of the new Monetary Policy Committee alongside Mr George and his two Deputy Governors? The Chancellor indicated that the new posts would be filled "soon".

But back to yesterday's announcement. First to go was the "Ken and Eddie" show.

These were the regular monthly meetings set up by Kenneth Clarke and the Governor which monetary policy and inflation targets were discussed and the level of interest rates were set. For some months now the Bank has been arguing for a rate rise to curb early inflationary pressures beginning to appear in the raw economic data.

Mr Clarke had resisted such calls but Mr Brown duly obliged with a 0.25 per cent hike in rates yesterday. But, he added, that in future "operational decisions on interest rate policy will be made by a new Monetary Policy Committee comprising the Governor, the

Deputy Governors and six members. The decisions will be made by a vote of the committee with each member having one vote. If there is no majority, the Governor will have the casting vote."

The sub-text of Mr Brown's *New Monetary Policy Framework* letter also appears to have a European flavour. While the Chancellor again yesterday appeared to rule out Britain joining a single European currency in the first wave, he has kept his options open to sign up the second time round, perhaps in the year 2002. Even now, though, attitudes to a single currency appear to be hardening across the Continent at the domestic and business levels.

New legislation will be needed to amend the Bank of England Act 1946 to institute many of the reforms and Mr Brown promised that these would be forthcoming in the Queen's Speech. He said: "The Bank will of course remain in

public ownership. The legislation will set up the new monetary policy framework, and provide for greater accountability."

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there are no prizes just for being first."

One of the criteria laid down for countries joining the single currency is to have an independent central bank. Mr Brown made several noises in that direction in yesterday's statement. For example, he said that in future the Bank's role as the Government's agent for debt management, the sale of gilts, the oversight of the gilts market and cash management would be transferred to the Treasury. This would be in line with the hands-off role played by central banks in Europe and avoid any possible conflict of interest.

The other intriguing area in which the Chancellor hinted at far-reaching reforms is the supervision of banks. Here the Bank has a mixed record, with names such as Johnson Matthey Bankers, Bank of Credit and Commerce International and Barings coming back to haunt it. But since the Barings collapse the Bank has introduced a series of its own reforms to banking and risk

supervision. Unusually, senior Bank directors have publicly warned in recent speeches of the dangers of "star" City salaries and how they can encourage undue risk taking.

Mr Brown is well aware that another costly bank failure would look very bad for the Government of the day and he, for one, is anxious to avoid having to appear at the dispatch box to explain yet another banking disaster.

That is why supervision was accorded such prominence. In yesterday's mission statement Mr Brown said that one Deputy Governor will support the Governor on monetary policy and the other will support the Governor on "financial stability", which in Bank-speak means regulation.

This appears to be the clearest indicator yet that policing UK banks will remain as it is with the proviso that the status quo might change depending on how plans to reform the present system of City regulation in general take shape.

Is that all? Not quite.

There is also a phrase about "supporting the general economic policies of the Government". But the order of priority looks clear, all the same at heart: this is the Bundesbank model, where the main duty of the central bank is to guard the value of the currency.

T

he Chancellor's statement yesterday also illustrates how much parliamentary attitudes to the Bank have changed. Right up until last summer there appeared to be a growing political consensus that the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street should become a central bank with its supervisory role taken over by a Banking Commission. That may even be the eventual outcome of the latest reforms. But by last autumn attitudes were changing. The Treasury Select Committee, through which the Bank will now report to Parliament, shied away from recommending a separation of duties. In Westminster, normally sceptic MPs were heard to say how much better the Bank was performing and it appears to have prevailed.

Cosy tea-time chats at the

Bank are clearly no longer the order of the day. The Bank

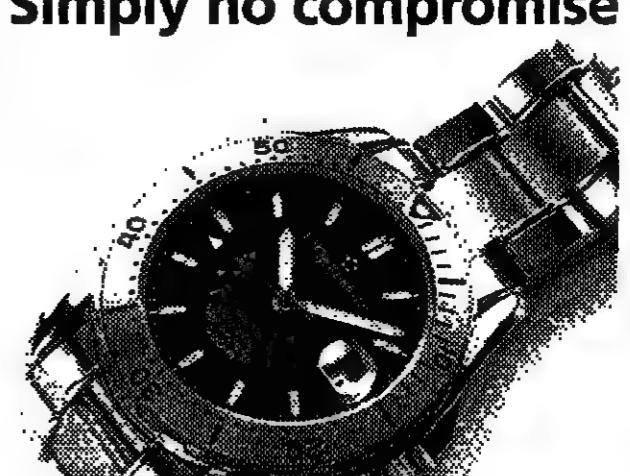
signalled last July that its days of secrecy are gone and Mr Brown's intervention yesterday merely underlines that fact. The pitiful Mr Brown has to avoid now is introducing too many names and extra positions to oversee his reforms. Such names as are put forward for these posts may not yet be regarded as the great and the good of the City. But give them a few years at the top and access to a few privileges and they might soon become just that. That would be a pity.

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he first Labour government since 1979 has to establish its anti-inflationary credentials, to be sure; and it would also be nice to close the unfaltering gap between gilt yields and those on French and German bonds (the hope that helped to ignite the markets). It would even help the Budget balance, Italian fashion. So this could still prove a good start. If only Brown didn't sound so doormat. And so smug.

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Private lives

THE first tax self-assessment demands are only five weeks old, and already the professions are jockeying for those huge fees we will all have to pay them for work previously done by the Inland Revenue. Much of the private client side at Theodore Goddard have upped and set up on their own. Joyce Smythe, private client partner, has combined with another Theodore Goddard high-flyer, Caroline Barkham, at the imaginatively named Smythe Barkham, taking

another half a dozen lawyers with them. This blows a large hole in what could be a highly remunerative line of work for Theodore Goddard, and it is unlikely to be the last such defection among the City's legal heavyweights keen to service all those high net worth individuals seeking expensive advice on how to minimise their tax bills and put one over on the new Chancellor.

FROM PDMF's latest review of pension fund performance: "This book is not about short-term movements. If we step back from the 'snakes and ladders' of the markets and look at recent events in their long-term context, this latest period is not exceptional." Translated: "We are the fund manager that spent much of the stock market bull run sitting on a pile of cash. We believe in a long-term approach, because short-term we got it wrong."

Footloose

AS MARK DUVAL close adviser to porn king Paul Raymond, settles out of court, his partner in the firm of Amhurst Brown Colombini has suffered a reversal. The romance between Count Carlo Colombini, 57

years young, and someone called Sintira, 30 years his junior and a 1980s pop singer, has ended. Count Carlo, former escort of Shirley Bassey and Raine Spencer too, is footloose again. Perhaps he might get in touch with another friend, one Pamela Bordes, whom he introduced to polite society. When Duval returns to the office he might ask Count Carlo when he picked up his title, too. Apparently he comes from Tonypandy, south Wales, a town rich in aristocratic heritage, where his parents ran a restaurant.

Mixed fortunes
THE winners and losers are gradually crawling out from under the

Lanica Trust stone. Actually, we have yet to spot a winner from Andrew Regan's farcical bid for the Co-op, but there are plenty of losers, including the associate of a well-known private client broker who is said to be sitting on 400,000 near-worthless Lanica Trust shares and waiting, petrified, for the shares to be relisted. Hambliss was up for £10 million if the bid succeeded, of course, but emerged with its reputation in tatters. And there is Damien McCrystal, once City diary editor for a rival publication. Damien went from UBS to be chief spin-doctor for Galileo, the Lanica vehicle now in liquidation, and is still employed there if a little at a loose end. He is now being forced to deny persistent Square Mile rumour that he has lost out on a success fee of a million quid. Half a million? "Not in the right ball-park."

Lloyd's sevens

FINAL proof that the corporate big-hitters have taken over Lloyd's of London. They manage a virtual clean sweep of the annual Lloyd's seven-a-side rugby tournament today. There is only one traditional Lloyd's members' agent among the 31 teams fielded, the rest bearing names such as Aon, Sedgwick and Willis Corroon — those last two fielding separate teams despite all those bid rumours. Bearing the standard for the old guard is Greenwich Lloyd's Underwriting, whose chances of success, director

Tim Gunter tells me, are not enhanced by having just seven male employees under the age of 35. The big boys have been known to plant ringers — one used to fly over from Paris every year a French international in its employ there. The Lloyd's sevens are always good fun, not least for the third-string competition in which the worst teams are selected, in reverse Darwinian style, for a final match. No one from the by now exhausted teams is allowed to leave the pitch until someone, anyone, has scored. Play has been known to continue for some time.

MARTIN WALLER



Gilts lead the way

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Yield	PE	1996	High	Low	Company	Price	Yield	PE	
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES														
152	407	387	Alfred Daimler	25	-	6.9	12.9	152	407	387	Alfred Daimler	25	-	6.9
512	512	500	Amcor (Pty)	50	-	11	14.5	512	512	500	Amcor (Pty)	50	-	11
75	96	92	Amcor (Pty) Bt	21	-	14.5	14.5	75	96	92	Amcor (Pty) Bt	21	-	14.5
1440	1440	1440	Amcor (Pty) Z	1440	-	12.5	12.5	1440	1440	1440	Amcor (Pty) Z	1440	-	12.5
572	572	560	Amcor (Pty) Z	572	-	12	14.5	572	572	560	Amcor (Pty) Z	572	-	12
288	321	317	Amcor (Pty) Z	321	-	12	14.5	288	321	317	Amcor (Pty) Z	321	-	12
124	124	124	Amcor (Pty) Z	124	-	12	14.5	124	124	124	Amcor (Pty) Z	124	-	12
1279	1279	1279	Amcor (Pty) Z	1279	-	12	14.5	1279	1279	1279	Amcor (Pty) Z	1279	-	12
BANKS														
1200	1210	1200	ABN Amro	50	-	20	16.5	1200	1210	1200	ABN Amro	50	-	20
561	570	560	Abbey Bt	845	-	9.5	15.0	561	570	560	Abbey Bt	845	-	9.5
521	521	512	ABN Amro	512	-	9.5	15.0	521	521	512	ABN Amro	512	-	9.5
269	303	297	Acu New Z	303	-	4	4.8	269	303	297	Acu New Z	303	-	4
763	763	752	ABN Amro	763	-	20	16.5	763	763	752	ABN Amro	763	-	20
1278	1278	1278	ABN Amro	1278	-	20	16.5	1278	1278	1278	ABN Amro	1278	-	20
1279	1279	1279	ABN Amro	1279	-	20	16.5	1279	1279	1279	ABN Amro	1279	-	20
1280	1280	1280	ABN Amro	1280	-	20	16.5	1280	1280	1280	ABN Amro	1280	-	20
1281	1281	1281	ABN Amro	1281	-	20	16.5	1281	1281	1281	ABN Amro	1281	-	20
1282	1282	1282	ABN Amro	1282	-	20	16.5	1282	1282	1282	ABN Amro	1282	-	20
1283	1283	1283	ABN Amro	1283	-	20	16.5	1283	1283	1283	ABN Amro	1283	-	20
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1286	1286	1286	ABN Amro	1286	-	20	16.5	1286	1286	1286	ABN Amro	1286	-	20
1287	1287	1287	ABN Amro	1287	-	20	16.5	1287	1287	1287	ABN Amro	1287	-	20
1288	1288	1288	ABN Amro	1288	-	20	16.5	1288	1288	1288	ABN Amro	1288	-	20
1289	1289	1289	ABN Amro	1289	-	20	16.5	1289	1289	1289	ABN Amro	1289	-	20
1290	1290	1290	ABN Amro	1290	-	20	16.5	1290	1290	1290	ABN Amro	1290	-	20
1291	1291	1291	ABN Amro	1291	-	20	16.5	1291	1291	1291	ABN Amro	1291	-	20
1292	1292	1292	ABN Amro	1292	-	20	16.5	1292	1292	1292	ABN Amro	1292	-	20
1293	1293	1293	ABN Amro	1293	-	20	16.5	1293	1293	1293	ABN Amro	1293	-	20
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1295	1295	1295	ABN Amro	1295	-	20	16.5	1295	1295	1295	ABN Amro	1295	-	20
1296	1296	1296	ABN Amro	1296	-	20	16.5	1296	1296	1296	ABN Amro	1296	-	20
1297	1297	1297	ABN Amro	1297	-	20	16.5	1297	1297	1297	ABN Amro	1297	-	20
1298	1298	1298	ABN Amro	1298	-	20	16.5	1298	1298	1298	ABN Amro	1298	-	20
1299	1299	1299	ABN Amro	1299	-	20	16.5	1299	1299	1299	ABN Amro	1299	-	20
1300	1300	1300	ABN Amro	1300	-	20	16.5	1300	1300	1300	ABN Amro	1300	-	20
1301	1301	1301	ABN Amro	1301	-	20	16.5	1301	1301	1301	ABN Amro	1301	-	20
1302	1302	1302	ABN Amro	1302	-	20	16.5	1302	1302	1302	ABN Amro	1302	-	20
1303	1303	1303	ABN Amro	1303	-	20	16.5	1303	1303	1303	ABN Amro	1303	-	20
1304	1304	1304	ABN Amro	1304	-	20	16.5	1304	1304	1304	ABN Amro	1304	-	20
1305	1305	1305	ABN Amro	1305	-	20	16.5	1305	1305	1305	ABN Amro	1305	-	20
1306	1306	1306	ABN Amro	1306	-	20	16.5	1306	1306	1306	ABN Amro	1306	-	20
1307	1307	1307	ABN Amro	1307	-	20	16.5	1307	1307	1307	ABN Amro	1307	-	20
1308	1308	1308	ABN Amro	1308	-	20	16.5	1308	1308	1308	ABN Amro	1308	-	20
1309	1309	1309	ABN Amro	1309	-	20	16.5	1309	1309	1309	ABN Amro	1309	-	20
1310	1310	1310	ABN Amro	1310	-	20	16.5	1310	1310	1310	ABN Amro	1310	-	20
1311	1311	1311	ABN Amro	1311	-	20	16.5	1311	1311	1311	ABN Amro	1311	-	20
1312	1312	1312	ABN Amro	1312	-	20	16.5	1312	1312	1312	ABN Amro	1312	-	20
1313	1313	1313	ABN Amro	1313	-	20	16.5	1313	1313	1313	ABN Amro	1313	-	20
1314	1314	1314	ABN Amro	1314	-	20	16.5	1314	1314	1314	ABN Amro	1314	-	20
1315	1315	1315	ABN Amro	1315	-	20	16.5	1315	1315	1315	ABN Amro	1315	-	20
1316	1316	1316	ABN Amro	1316	-	20	16.5	1316	1316	1316	ABN Amro	1316	-	20
1317	1317	1317	ABN Amro	1317	-	20	16.5	1317	1317	1317	ABN Amro	1317	-	20
1318	1318	1318	ABN Amro	1318	-	20	16.5	1318	1318	1318	ABN Amro	1318	-	20
1319	1319	1319	ABN Amro	1319	-	20	16.5	1319						

Pearson in £1.25bn chase for Fairfax

FROM RACHEL BRIDGE IN SYDNEY

PEARSON, publisher of the *Financial Times*, has had high-level talks aimed at clearing the way for an A\$2.5 billion (£1.25 billion) bid for Fairfax, the Australian publishing group, in competition with Kerry Packer.

A spokesman for the Australian Government confirmed yesterday that Stephen Hill, chief executive of the *Financial Times*, met John Howard, the Australian Prime Minister, for an hour on Monday with four representatives of a consortium called Australian Independent Newspapers.

The consortium has financial backing from Australian life insurers Colonial Mutual, National Mutual and AMP, as well as a promise of debt funding from ANZ, the bank.

Pearson is primarily interested in the *Australian Financial Review*, the local equivalent of the *Financial Times*, which it tried to buy from the receiver of Fairfax when it collapsed in 1991.

Pearson's move comes as the Australian Government prepares to unveil details of its planned shake-up of the country's media ownership laws.

which are at present a confusing variety of restrictions for different forms of media.

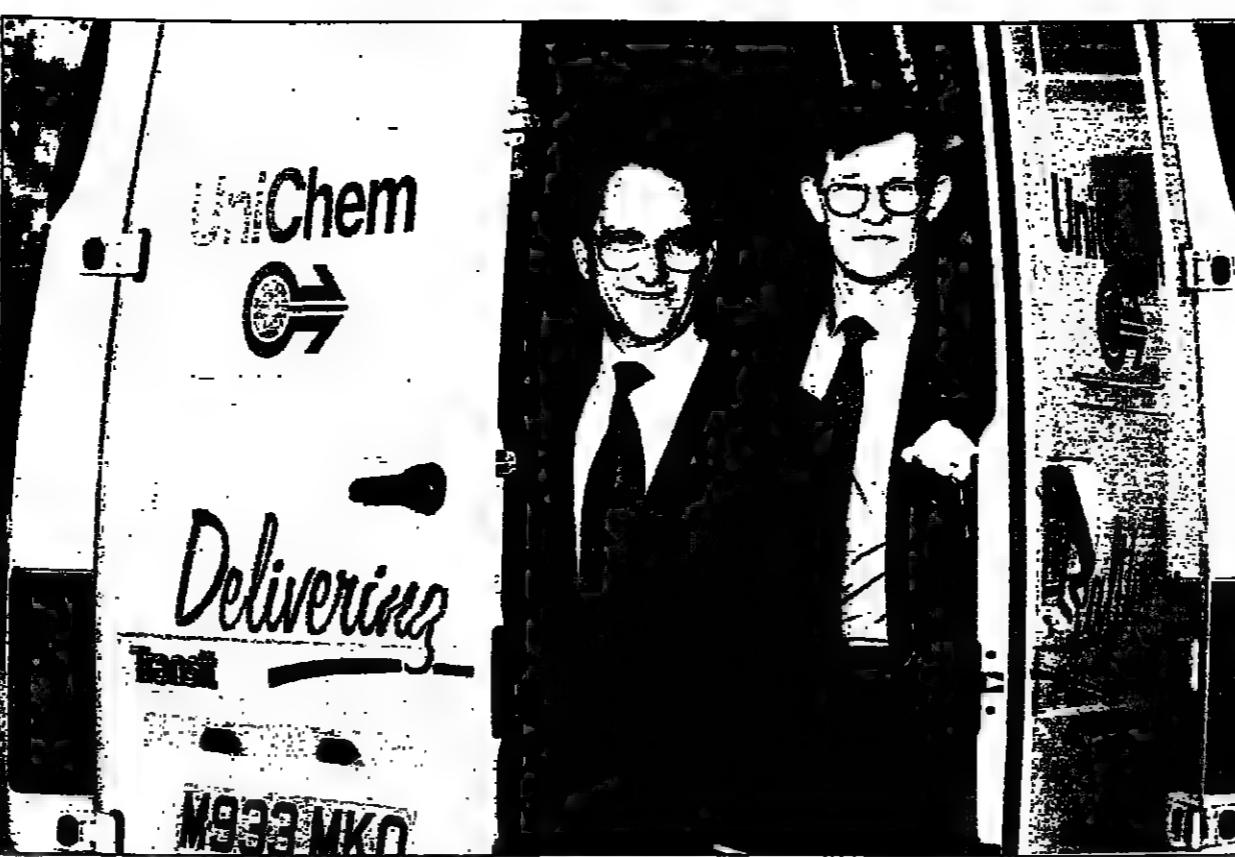
The new laws are widely expected to ease restrictions on ownership and lead to a change in the ownership structure of Fairfax, whose newspaper interests also include *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Melbourne Age* — two of the five most profitable newspapers in the world.

At present Mr Packer, who has made no secret of his desire to take control of Fairfax, is limited to a 15 per cent stake in the group because he also owns the Nine television network in Australia, while New Zealand-based Brierley Investments, which bought a 20 per cent stake in Fairfax from Conrad Black, the Canadian media owner, for A\$447 million in December, is limited to a 25 per cent stake.

Last week, however, Mr Howard signalled his intention to allow a single operator to take control of the group after describing Fairfax's current shareholding structure as very unstable.

Mr Howard said: "The Fairfax share register is very unstable and you really don't have anybody running the company or alternatively not in an identifiable way. I mean, that's not meant to be critical of the management, but the fact is it's a pretty unstable situation."

Kerry Stokes, chairman of the Seven television network has also thrown his hat into the ring for Fairfax, declining to rule himself out as a possible bidder. He said: "The Seven network will look at its position when we find out what the Government has decided. If it is commercially viable, we'll certainly look at taking a position in Fairfax."



Jeff Harris, left, and Geoff Cooper are to see their pay rises uncoupled from increases for other UniChem staff

UniChem chiefs receive pay tonic

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

DIRECTORS of UniChem

stop pegging executive directors' pay rises to increases given to other staff. Remuneration consultants have said directors' pay is below market level, as it is to be increased over the next two years.

Annual bonuses of up to 25 per cent of salary will be introduced this year for executive directors and senior executives.

They do not depend on earnings performance; executives will benefit if the group and/or their division achieves the annual budgeted performance, after allowing for the cost of the bonuses, and/or the relevant executive has achieved a satisfactory personal performance".

Jeff Harris, chief executive and highest paid, had total pay of £309,000 last year, up from £284,000. The second-highest paid, Barry Andrews, retail director, earned £236,000 including £18,000 bonus (£192,000). Geoff Cooper, finance director, was third-best paid, on £234,000 (£214,000). Mr Harris and Mr Cooper had no annual bonus.

UK rail firms look for Australian connection

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT IN SYDNEY

NATIONAL EXPRESS, Virgin Rail and GB Railways

emerged as rival bidders for Australia's prestigious but loss-making long-distance passenger train operation, which is expected to carry a price tag of up to A\$100 million (about £50 million).

The three UK train operators have been shortlisted to bid for Australia's three long-distance passenger services.

These comprise The Ghan, which runs between Adelaide and Alice Springs; The Indian-Pacific, between Perth and Sydney, and The Overlander, which runs between Melbourne and Adelaide.

The services, which are mainly used by tourists and are regarded as being Australia's equivalent to the Orient Express, are being sold as part of the Government's mass privatisation of Australia National, its rail business, which also includes rail freight services and railway workshops in Tasmania and South Australia.

period for the company. Consequently, first-quarter results are not indicative of expected full-year results."

The group is pleased with the strength of auction sales and its financial performance so far this year. It said the \$35.8 million raised in Hong Kong last week was the highest of the week. The highlight of the week was the sale of a collection of Ming and Qing dynasty porcelain.

Losses per share fell to 12 cents from 15 cents.

Sotheby's trims loss in first quarter to \$6.8m

BY OUR CITY STAFF

SHARES in Sotheby's Holdings rose 35p to 990p after the auction group reported a first-quarter loss of \$6.8 million, an improvement on the previous year's \$8.2 million loss.

Auction sales rose from \$155 million to \$207 million. Sotheby's said: "Due to the seasonal nature of the art auction market, auction sales in the first quarter have historically represented approximately 10-12 per cent of total sales for the year and the first quarter is traditionally a loss

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Pilot pay dispute at American settled

THE long-running dispute over pilot pay at American Airlines, the second-largest carrier in the US, has ended with agreement on a five-year labour contract. The pilots approved the contract by a 70 per cent majority, averting the threat of a second strike.

The settlement means that American can go ahead with a \$6 billion order for 103 new aeroplanes from Boeing. Part of the dispute centred on the pilots' refusal to fly new jets, but they have ended their opposition in return for a 9 per cent pay increase and share options. The dispute caused a sharp drop in American's profits over the last quarter as the strike threat drove customers to book with other airlines.

Air France aid battle

SIX European airlines — among them British Airways, Air UK and British Midland — have lodged a formal request to the European Court in Luxembourg to cancel a French rescue of Air France, the state-controlled airline, court sources said. The airlines said that the court should annul a decision by the European Commission in July 1994, authorising the French Government to give the airline Fr20 billion in aid.

Sidlaw dividend held

SIDLAW, the flexible packaging company that has been widely restructured, is holding the interim dividend at 1p a share. In the six months to March 31, pre-tax profits from continuing businesses were £1.7 million (£1.4 million loss), on turnover of £77.2 million (£78.1 million). Overall pre-tax profits were £17.39 million (£4 million loss) after a £17.3 million profit from disposals. Adjusted earnings were 2.3p a share (1.7p loss).

Tesco's £630m Irish deal

THE European Commission has approved the sale to Tesco of Associated British Foods' retail and related business in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The £630 million takeover was approved by the merger taskforce, and covers 75 stores in the Republic and 34 in Northern Ireland, with total sales of £1.24 billion. In the year to September, operating profits were £51 million, with net assets of about £170 million.

FI wins ministry work

FI, the computer services group, is to take charge of the entire software system used by the Department for Education and Employment in a £13 million outsourcing contract. The five-year deal is FI's first big public sector contract. About 160 civil servants will be transferred to FI. An £11 million contract to design and support computer programs used by Whitbread, the brewing and restaurants group, has been renewed.

Waterford rejects bid

WATERFORD FOODS has formally rejected a £268 million bid from Avonmore Foods, its Irish rival. Waterford, made up of Waterford Foods and Waterford Co-operative Society, said that the offer did not reflect its underlying value nor "its strategic positioning in key markets and the contribution it can make to any merged entity in the future". Waterford hinted that improved merger terms might be considered.

Girobank

Girobank announces that with effect from close of business on 6 May 1997 its Base Rate was increased from 6.00% to 6.25% per annum.

Girobank plc. Registered in England No. 1950000. Registered Office: 49 Park Lane, London W1Y 4EQ. A member of the Alliance & Leicester Group.

Base Rate

Morgan Grenfell & Co. Limited announces that its Base Rate has been amended from 6% to 6.25% per annum with effect from May 8, 1997 until further notice.

All facilities (including regulated consumer credit agreements) with a rate linked to Morgan Grenfell & Co. Limited Base Rate will be varied accordingly.

Morgan Grenfell & Co. Limited
23 Great Winchester Street, London EC2P 2AX

Deutsche Morgan Grenfell

NatWest Base Rate

NotWest announces that with effect from 6 May 1997 its Base Rate is increased from 6.00% to 6.25% per annum.

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NatWest

National Westminster Bank Plc, 41 Lothbury, London EC2P 2BP

The CO-OPERATIVE BANK

BASE RATE CHANGE

With effect from Wednesday 7th May 1997, Co-operative Bank Base Rate changes from 6.00% p.a. to 6.25% p.a.

THE CO-OPERATIVE BANK PLC.
PART OF THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

1 Balloon St., Manchester M60 4EP. Tel: 0161 832 3456

Coutts & Co Base Rate.

With effect from Tuesday 6th May 1997 Coutts & Co has increased its Base Rate from 6.00% p.a. to 6.25% p.a.



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Telephone: 0171-753 1000

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Bank of Scotland announces that with effect from Tuesday 6th May 1997 its Base Rate has been increased from 6.00% per annum to 6.25% per annum.

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Interest rate change

Allied Irish Bank (GB) announces that with effect from close of business on 6 May 1997 its Base Rate was increased from 6.00% to 6.25% pa.

Allied Irish Bank (GB)
Bankcentre, Belmont Road
Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 1SA.
Telephone (01895) 272222



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Barclays Base Rate Change

Barclays Bank PLC announces that with effect from

6th May 1997, its Base Rate has increased

from 6.00% to 6.25%

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REGISTERED NUMBER 102567

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

*From May 29th
BT are cutting
national daytime
calls by 10%.*



■ PREVIEW 1

From Hollywood actress Kathleen Turner playing Talulah Bankhead at the Minerva, Chichester



■ PREVIEW 2

... and Nigel Kennedy dusting off his renowned interpretation of the Elgar Violin Concerto ...



■ PREVIEW 3

... to Steven Spielberg's long-awaited Jurassic Park sequel, *The Lost World* ...



■ PREVIEW 4
... and Twyla Tharp's company at the Edinburgh Festival: we pick the best shows of the summer

From Disney stage spectacular to Seurat exhibition: *Times* critics select the unmissable shows of the coming months

Hot tickets for summer nights

Benedict Nightingale

When it comes to visual extravagance and high-tech bravura, nothing is likely to challenge the Disney Organisation's *Beauty and the Beast*, at £10 million plus the most expensive show ever to have hit London. Both *The Fix*, a musical about politics opening at the Dominion on Monday, and *Damn Yankees*, which brings Jerry Lewis to the Adelphi on June 4, will doubtless look modest beside it. But in the weeks after the *Beast* slouches into the Dominion next Tuesday, there's plenty of competition in other fields.

Revivals? Though it will be fun to see if Peter Weiss's *Marat/Sade* (May 14, Olivier) has retained the frisson it had in the faraway 1960s, most eyes will be on the launch of the Globe in early June and on Peter Hall's remarkably busy season at the Old Vic.

The replica of Shakespeare's playhouse on Bankside, already open to the sun and the tourists, will officially open to theatregoers in early June with performances of *Henry V*, boasting Mark Rylance in God-for-Harry mode, and *The Winter's Tale*. Odder, more ambitious stuff follows in late August in the form of two pieces by lesser Jacobean Middleton's cheerfully satiric *Chaste Maid in Cheapside* and Beaumont and Fletcher's grim *Maid's Tragedy*.

Half a mile away, Sir Peter directs Michael Pennington and Felicity Kendal in Chekhov's *Seagull*, opening this Friday, and on June 27, gives us Ben Kingsley and Alan Howard as the tramps in the famous play whose English-language premiere he himself staged 40 years ago. Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. A week later comes a Restoration comedy, Vanbrugh's *Provoked Wife*, with Pennington as the famous Arute and the up-and-coming Victoria Hamilton.

And new plays? The Vic is busy here, too. The author of *The Steward of Christendom*,

Sebastian Barry, delves yet again into offbeat Irish history in his *Prayers of Sherkin* (May 19), and a young British dramatist, Samuel Adamson, ventures to Australia and Sydney operaland for *Grace Note* (Jul 7).

Meanwhile, the National seeks to prove that Patrick Marber's poker-game comedy *Dealer's Choice* was not a one-off by staging his *Closet* (May 29) and follows it up on June 20 with Richard Eyre's production of the latest David Hare, *Amy's View*, in which Judi Dench plays a famous actress battling with her daughter. And watch out for The McDonagh Trilogy, which the Royal Court opens at the Duke of York's on July 26. With his new *Skull in Connemara* and *Lonesome West* joining *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, and his *Cripple of Inishmaan* continuing its run at the National, Martin McDonagh will have four blackish comedies about the Irish outback in London—and we'll have the chance to assess the theatre's fastest-growing reputation.

Nothing new in Stratford after the Alex Jennings Hamlet opens tomorrow, and at Chichester most excitement in the studio theatre. Though the main-house offerings include Coward's *Blithe Spirit* (Jun 17), with Maureen Lipman and Twiggy, the Minerva brings us *Leslie Caron* as George Sand (Jun 9), Kathleen Turner as Talulah Bankhead (Jul 1), Julie Christie as Marguerite Duras's *Suzanna* (Jul 22) and Makarova in Shaw's seldom-done *Misalliance* (Aug 19). And so off to the Edinburgh Festival, which starts on August 10 and this year offers Peter Stein's production of Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard*, Stephane Braunschweig's version of *Measure for Measure*, and a revival of the play that had its premiere in Auld Reekie nearly 50 years ago: T.S. Eliot's *Cocktail Party*.

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The most expensive show ever to hit London: Disney's £10 million *Beauty and the Beast*, which opens next week

Is there an unlimited supply of unperformed early Benjamin Britten pieces waiting to be discovered? So it appears. One highlight of the 50th Aldeburgh Festival (Jun 13-29) will be the premiere of a Double Concerto for Violin and Viola, written by the teenage Britten in 1932 and hitherto so unknown that it isn't even mentioned in some Britten biographies.

Many other festivals also have premieres. In London, *Spiralfield* (Jun 4-25) splices up its splendid array of choral and early music with the first performance of Judith Weir's Piano Concerto. The venerable Three Choirs (Aug 16-22), held in Hereford this year with an orchestra (the Bournemouth Symphony) in residence for the first time, promises a big choral and orchestral work by Judith Bingham, who has really come good recently. And Bath is offering a weekend of contemporary music focused mainly on the avant-garde scores of the 75-year-old fannish Xenakis (May 30-Jun 1).

Other festivals go mildly wacky. On the South Bank in London Laurie Anderson has

lined up a *Meltdown* Festival (Jun 21-Jul 5) that includes such diverse spectacles as a concert by 100 violins, and one of the world's great violinists, Gidon Kremer, playing tangos. Even more extraordinary string 'happenings' can be found at the City of London Festival (Jun 19-Jul 10), which includes a *Metamorphosis* (Jun 21-Jul 5) that includes such diverse spectacles as a concert by 100 violins, and one of the world's great violinists, Gidon Kremer, playing tangos. Even more extraordinary string 'happenings' can be found at the City of London Festival (Jun 19-Jul 10), which includes a *Metamorphosis* (Jun 21-Jul 5) that includes such diverse spectacles as a concert by 100 violins, and one of the world's great violinists, Gidon Kremer, playing tangos. 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CHOICE 1
Heinrich Schiff
conducts a
period-instrument
Missa Solemnis

VENUE: Tonight at the
Festival Hall, London



CHOICE 2
Siobhan Redmond
plays Belimperia in
Kyd's drama, *The
Spanish Tragedy*

VENUE: Opens tonight at
the Swan Theatre, Stratford



POP

Beck proves to
be a master of
past genres in
a memorable gig
in the courtyard
of Dublin Castle



THEATRE
... while the
Gate Theatre
in that fair
city goes deep
into the land
of Pinter

GIE KNAPE/ LONDON FEATURES

LONDON

CHILINGRINGIAN QUARTET The four in a series of six concert evenings. The opening concert with Mozart's String Quartet in D minor and is followed by Hugo Wood's *Song Quartet No. 1* (Mozart's Clarinet Concerto with Paul Stoenner). A concert talk by Leon Chillingring and Hugo Wood takes place at 6.15pm. Wigmore Hall, Wigmore Street, W1 (0171-938 2141). Tonight, 7.30pm.

ORCHESTRA OF THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT Heinrich Schiff conducts the OAE and the English Chamber Choir in a programme that explores the variety of life in 18th-century England. With soloists, Anna Caterina Antonacci, Judith Thompson, soprano; Catherine Wom-Singers, alto; James Cray, tenor; and Stephen Gold, bass. Festival Hall, Southbank, SE1 (0171-800 4242). Tonight, 7.30pm.

THE PEOPLE DOWNTOWNS Directed by Stephen Daldry, this new play by Alan Strachan explores the varieties of life led by people living in an urban environment. Directed by Rufus Norris, designed by Kate Littler, with music by Mark Hollis. The Art of Random Living was staged at the Young Vic last year. Young Vic Studio, The Old Vic, SE1 (0171-928 6363). Openings: 7.30pm, Mon-Sat; 6.30pm, Fri-Sat; 5.30pm, Sun. May 31.

ABSENT FRIENDS Revival of Ayckbourn's comedy, in one act. Cohn and friends are determined to comfort him in his grief — except that he doesn't need安慰 as much as they do. Cribbs, Croxton Hall, Greenwhich, SE10 (0181-955 7759). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; Mon-Sat, 3.30pm, until June 7.

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THEATRE GUIDE
Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

■ House full, return by

■ Some seats available

■ Seats at all prices

■ CANDIDATE and the excellent Kathryn

Evans as his scheming servant

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■ ABSENT FRIENDS Revival of Ayckbourn's comedy, in one act. Cohn and friends are determined to comfort him in his grief — except that he doesn't need安慰 as much as they do. Cribbs, Croxton Hall, Greenwhich, SE10 (0181-955 7759). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; Mon-Sat, 3.30pm, until June 7.

■ THE CRITICS — UP FOR REVIEW Four theatre critics, including the assessors for this guide, hazard their opinions on the plays they are reviewing. Michael Pennington chooses *Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice*; John Lithgow, *Antony and Cleopatra*; Judi Dench, *Twelfth Night*; and Stephen Baynes, *Young Vic Studio: The Old Vic*.

■ DERBY Geoffrey Beevers directs his own excellent dual-bill of Adams' *Bees* and George Eliot's *Adam Bed*. Royal Exchange, Manchester, M1 (0161-205 6068). Matinees.

PLAYHouses Eagle Theatre (0171-747 2888).

■ CANDIDATE and the excellent Kathryn

Evans as his scheming servant

DOMINAR WAREHOUSE Esplanade, W1 (0171-389 9123). Now previewing, 7.30pm. Opens May 12; 7.30pm.

THE HERBAL BED Peter Whelan's *Woman in the Woods* at the Barbican. Some cast changes and Teresa Batham continues to play Shakespeare's daughter, and Stephen Boxer his Funan instructor.

</div



■ DANCE

After 25 years, the intensity is undiminished: Siobhan Davies celebrates a personal milestone



■ RISING STAR

Disney heroine: Julie-Alannah Brighten has won the lead role in *Beauty and the Beast*



■ MUSIC 1

Shine man David Helfgott takes the audience vote, but no prizes for pianistic discipline



■ MUSIC 2

Danièle Gatti is in inspiring form conducting the RPO in Mahler's Fifth at the Albert Hall

GILL ALLEN

A lifetime of being in the right place

Allen Robertson meets choreographer Siobhan Davies as she celebrates 25 years at the top of her profession

She has been creating dances for 25 years, has run her own company for the past decade and received virtually every award the arts community could shower on her, including an Olivier last year. But ask Siobhan Davies about her success and the answer that comes back is modest. "I look forward to the future because I want to get better. Looking at the past only reminds you of niggling failures."

Neither Davies nor her works shout at you. Instead, they exude a quiet intensity. Her dances shimmer and undulate rather than glint or explode. Even when her choreography turns fast and dense it never loses its essential lyricism because Davies is a poet of movement.

At 16, she was one of the first students to step through the newly opened doors of the London Contemporary Dance School. Though she had no previous dance training, she became a member of London Contemporary Dance Theatre with breathtaking speed. Just a year later, in 1987, she had begun what was to turn into a distinguished performing career.

She stopped performing with abrupt deliberateness on November 3, 1983. "It was in Bath and I was dancing with Second Stride and lots of friends came down and wolf-whistled."

"I had really enjoyed performing, but at that particular moment, if you want the honest truth, I could not bear the actual preparation for performance. I just could not face one more warm-up."

"I still miss it," she admits. "If I could somehow just inject immediate physical courage and physical knowledge then, yes, I would love to perform again. But, no, I'm not going to."

Davies, who had first tried her hand at choreography as early as 1972, felt that the way forward involved stepping outside the per-

forming process. "I had to sit quietly and look at the work. Not being in it was a big learning tool. One of the biggest difficulties for dancers who turn into choreographers is that their physical being is inside the work; therefore, if they feel a sensation, they automatically imagine that the sensation is coming across to the viewer. 'This feels good,' so it must look good.' But that isn't necessarily so."

"For example, there's a moment in my new piece, *Bank*, where the dancers must feel they're in a rush hour at King's Cross during a bomb scare. I can see that it's working visually, but I know from a 'doing' point of view that if I'd been in it, I'd have despised."

But since I'm sitting outside I can cool them down. I can say 'It's working. Keep going.'

When *Bank* premieres in Blackpool on Friday, the dancers' sense of chaos will have long since been transformed into what she could see all along. If not, then she will have changed it into something else. Davies and her small team of chosen dancers work both individually and co-operatively towards their shared goals.

For this spring tour there are only six dancers. In the autumn there will be eight. She explains her casting strategy by saying the budget really only stretches to seven performers.

Though she is one of Britain's most honoured artists, Davies is financially unable to sustain her

company as a full-time concern. "It makes me blanch what the dancers have to go through in order to be the artists that they are. They are earning far less than anybody else in this field. I mean, anybody who manages them, who plays music for them, crews for them, directs them, anyone who is in the theatre for them, is earning a far greater purse than they are. Okay, it is probably the same for the corps de ballet at the Royal and I know things are very tight in New York right now, but I can't say all artists are suffering, so we should suffer too, because I only have responsibility for this group of people. We have got to keep trying to raise the profile of dancers and not necessarily force them to become teachers or choreographers or whatever else."

For the first time last year, Davies's management was able to guarantee the dancers six months' wages. "It's in two three-month blocks," she explains, "which means they have to find their own methods of survival — financial, emotional and artistic — in the other blocks. Which I know is hard; but at the same time, and I've got to be very clear about this, I don't think they work for me because they want me to 'care' for them, or that I should in any form dominate their artistic lives."

Davies's company has put in a lottery application aimed at securing a studio of its own. Currently it rehearses catch as catch can in Brighton Festival May 15-17

venues from Greenwich to Euston. The administration office is in Islington, the scenery stored somewhere else.

"A studio would give me a professional standing," she says, "and now there are times when I feel amateur, when I may not go into a studio at will because I needed to have booked it way ahead in advance."

"Obviously I don't want to be indulgent about it and say I need yards and yards of expensive London space at my disposal just because I want it. But the truth is, we're so unused to being greedy that we sometimes don't know how to demand what should be our due."

As Davies continues to pursue her goals she insists that she will not be badgered into areas she doesn't think suit her or her dancers. She is thrilled that companies such as Adventures in Motion Pictures have had a huge popular success, but insists that the *Riverdance* phenomenon has nothing to do with the world as she knows it.

"We tease each other in the studio sometimes and I say I'm going to do a musical next. They all look at me in absolute horror. Then we try a few musical steps and we all go, 'Well, maybe not this year'."

"I have no desire to throw my arms out and try and encompass an enormous amount. I only want to do what is absolutely needed at the moment. Theatres, funding bodies, grants applications all ask 'What's the brand new thing that you're going to do?'

"Well, it's not going to be brand new. Is Howard Hodgkin brand new? Is Damien Hirst going to be brand new every time? That's not what an artist does. I simply want to be in the right place."

● Siobhan Davies Dance Company is at the Grand Theatre, Blackpool, on Friday and Saturday, and at the Brighton Festival May 15-17



Siobhan Davies: "I look forward to the future. Looking at the past only reminds you of failures"

CONCERTS: The much-hyped David Helfgott pleases his fans; new boy and old timer in form on the podium

Brave, but not yet brilliant

David Helfgott
Festival Hall



David Helfgott appears to be thoroughly enjoying himself giving the lie to the charge of exploitation voiced by some

There is a remarkable irony in the fact that David Helfgott, the Australian pianist of *Shine* fame whose mental breakdown was partly caused by the inordinate pressures of public performance, is now playing to capacity audiences in prestigious venues all over the world. What is more, he appears to be thoroughly enjoying himself, giving the lie to the charge of exploitation voiced in some quarters.

Audiences love him too: they hang on every note, enjoy every gasp (he croons his own commentary throughout) and give him a standing ovation when it's all over. Even his unconventional stage etiquette — the flailing arms, the shuffling in a full circle to acknowledge applause — wins him sympathy. Regarded as the public comeback of the broken man whose harrowing experiences have moved thousands, his Festival Hall performance on Monday night — the first leg of his UK tour — was a heartwarming occasion.

Judged by purely musical criteria, it is another story. Clearly Helfgott is a pianist of considerable abilities — at least potentially — but he is as yet unable to realise his vision. In the first half of the programme he substituted for the advertised one, he offered some playing of great delicacy and moments of extraordinarily poetic insight, especially in Liszt's Concert Etude No 3 (*Un Sospiro*) and Mendelssohn's Andante and Ronde Capricciosa.

In Liszt's Second Ballade in B Minor, however, the idiosyncrasies began to play havoc with musical sense. Passages of extreme introversion were juxtaposed with cascades of double octaves dispatched with maximum velocity and force, but with no mediation between them.

What Helfgott's playing lacks at the moment is discipline, shape and structure. Nowhere was this more evident than in Beethoven's *Appassionata Sonata*, occu-

• Helfgott lacks discipline, shape and structure

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London Evening Standard, March 1997 UNMISSABLE

Master of detail

RPO/Gatti
Albert Hall

WITH each of their concerts together, the Royal Philharmonic's good fortune at having secured Danièle Gatti as its music director becomes increasingly clear. Morale has improved and with it the orchestra's sound, and both seemed to be pushing towards the top of the scale at Sunday night at the Albert Hall in an excellently played programme of Mendelssohn and Mahler.

Gatti has become a conductor of considerable authority, and in an inspiring account of Mahler's Fifth Symphony he got everything he wanted from the orchestra. Each detail, each nuance was set in place: under a lesser conductor this performance might have sounded fussy, but Gatti,

working without a score, maintained the flow coherently. He has the big-hearted, romantic temperament needed for this music, but none of the excess that can imply, and all sections of the orchestra were kept firmly in check.

Incisive playing in the first movement set the mood. The opening trumpet solo, bright and crisp, gave way to the dark-coloured funeral march in which the emphasis was on beauty of tone. Inner turmoil was not disguised, but the music sounded less neurotic than it can, and all the surging nervous energy was saved for the second movement. The Austrian dances of the Scherzo took on a very genial lilt, the pizzicato episodes had special delicacy. The dreamy Adagio seemed to come out of nothingness, and Gatti only really whipped up his forces in response to Mahler's hard-won triumph at the symphony's majestic close.

In Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto the refined soloist was Shlomo Mintz, whose way of letting melodies simply unclo themselves in sweetened lines at the top and a number sound down below makes him a natural in this repertoire. But Gatti also has interesting things to say about the composer who is featuring this season. Here the playing was light and airy, and the conductor's Italianate instinct was to emphasize Mendelssohn's sunny melodicness.

GERALD LARNER

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GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament
JULIE-ALANAH BRIGHTEN

Age: 25

Profession: Actress, girl next door, local hero in her home town in North Devon.

Why is she famous? She won the female lead in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, which opens at the Dominion on Tuesday.

What are her credentials? After Guildford School of Acting and the National Youth Music Theatre, she led Gary Wilmot astray as Lady Jacqueline in a regional tour of *Me and My Girl* and made her West End debut in the chorus line of *Oliver!*



Why her? Blonde, blue-eyed, 5ft 6in. "Belle is a lot like me. I'm stuck in a small town where she's thought of as odd because she doesn't conform. She's not like your regular Disney heroine. She doesn't go off to find a handsome prince".

Career sidelines: She fronted a rock band for four years, singing Cher and Madonna covers at hotels and parties on the Devon circuit. "We did go to St Tropez one year. Two of the guitarists went on to form Reel!"

What's it like working with a Beast (aka Alasdair Harvey)? "He's lovable and frightening. But if I met him in a dark alley, I'd run a million miles. Belle is a lot madder than me."

Is it hard being one of the only humans on stage? No — it's harder for everyone else. "It's incredibly restricting trying to express real human emotions when you're a dancing teapot."

Which actors have influenced you? "I admire Robert Lindsay and Julia Mackenzie because they are so adaptable. They can move from musicals to films to straight stage roles."

What happens after this? "I don't know whether to record an album or what. It might sound naive but I want to try everything, especially film. There's a huge buzz about the British film industry after *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Trainspotting* and *Mike Leigh*. I'd love to ride that wave."

Any wise words? "Stay true to yourself. It's the least complicated way of getting through life."

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Power to revoke order if child is protected

In re G (a Minor) (Adoption: Freeing order)

Before Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Lloyd of Berwick, Lord Nicholls of Birkenhead, Lord Steyn and Lord Hoffmann (Speaker May 1)

The court had power under section 20 of the Adoption Act 1976 to revoke an order freeing a child for adoption even though the former parent could not be properly permitted to resume sole parental responsibility, provided that the child's welfare could be protected by making the revocation conditional on the obtaining of a care order under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 or in some other way.

The House of Lords so held in allowing an appeal by the mother of G from the order of the Court of Appeal (Lord Justices Butler-Sloss, Lord Justice Saville and Mr Justice Douglas Brown) (*The Times* June 11, 1996; [1996] 2 FLR 308) dismissing her appeal against the order of Judge Wilcock, QC, in Barnstaple County Court in so far as he had refused to revoke a freeing order in respect of G.

The child had been in local authority care and was freed for adoption in 1993. In the event, the prospective adopters decided not to proceed and he became a boarder at a special school experienced in dealing with severely emotionally disturbed children.

When 12 months had elapsed since the freeing order and no

adoption had been made, the local authority had been required by section 19(2) of the 1976 Act to notify the mother of the fact.

The mother had then applied under section 20 to revoke the freeing order. While accepting that the child should stay at the special school she did not suggest that he should be made subject to a fresh care order. The judge had refused to revoke the freeing order but granted her limited access.

On the mother's appeal she agreed that if the freeing order were to be revoked the local authority should obtain a care order, but the Court of Appeal had held that revocation could not be made conditional on the obtaining of a care order and operated only so as to give the former parent sole and unfeathered parental responsibility. It too, refused to order revocation.

Mr Charles Bloom, QC and Sarah Forster for the mother; Mr Michael Horowitz, QC and Miss Hayley Griffiths for the local authority; Mr James Munby, QC and Miss Kary Firth-Butterfield for the guardian ad litem.

LORD BROWNE-WILKINSON said that on the making of a care order under section 31, the parent did not lose all parental responsibility but shared it with the local authority. However, the authority had power to determine the extent to which the parent might meet that responsibility.

The effect of the freeing order was that the parental responsibility which the mother had previously enjoyed was extinguished. The existing care order should stay at the special school but the former parent should be made subject to a fresh care order.

The Court of Appeal, although initially attracted to the proposal that the position could be covered by a care order, felt bound to reject that course as running counter to the express purpose of section 30.

His Lordship did not agree and emphasised the background against which section 20 fell to be construed. The parent of a child enjoyed parental responsibility of some kind even where there was intervention under the 1989 Act and had certain statutory rights thereunder.

On the making of a freeing order all the ordinary rights of a parent and those statutory rights were extinguished. That was a necessary corollary to enable an adoption to take place.

But if the proposed adoption failed to materialise and there was no other proposed adoption pending, it was hard to accept that Parliament could have intended that the parent should continue to be deprived of all those rights.

Section 20 did not provide that the former parent must wish for sole and unfeathered parental responsibility. Parental responsibility could be shared. Where a care order had been made that responsibility was deferred, but even so the former parent might still wish to resume parental responsibility, shared or selected if that might be appropriate under the Children Act or under its inherent jurisdiction or in some other way.

In the present case, the court was in no doubt that the former parent was not a suitable person to have such sole responsibility. If she was not a suitable person it could not be for the welfare of the child to make an order vesting sole responsibility in her.

Those factors had led the Court of Appeal in the conclusion that there was a lacuna in the 1976 Act in dealing with a child, subject to a freeing order, who subsequently became unlikely to become adopted but whose parent could not properly be permitted to resume sole and unfeathered responsibility.

The Court of Appeal, although initially attracted to the proposal that the position could be covered by a care order, felt bound to reject that course as running counter to the express purpose of section 30.

There was no lacuna in the Adoption Act. It operated alongside and as part of the general legislation regulating powers over children. There was no reason why the provisions of the Act had to be read as a self-sufficient code. The powers it conferred in relation to

adoption could, if necessary, be used in conjunction with and supplemented by the powers of the Children Act.

The position was as follows:

Where a freeing order had been made but at the end of one year thereafter it was clear that no adoption was likely to take place within a short period, the freeing order might be revoked so as to restore the parent to his or her normal rights and to ensure that the child did not remain in an adoption limbo.

Even if the former parent was not at the date of revocation, it was to have sole and unfeathered responsibility, the court had jurisdiction to make the order provided that the welfare of the child could be protected by making the revocation conditional upon such consequential orders as were appropriate under the Children Act or under its inherent jurisdiction or in some other way.

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Deciding when structure is part of land

Ellestree Ltd v Morris and Another

Before Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Lloyd of Berwick, Lord Nolan, Lord Nicholls of Birkenhead and Lord Clyde

[Speeches May 1]

Where the question to be determined was whether, when a structure was built, it became part and parcel of the land itself or was

an object in its own right, the answer depended on the degree and the object of annexation to the land of the objects brought there.

The degree of annexation varied from object to object. Therefore, the answer depended on the uses and purposes for which the objects brought on the land were created and designed.

Even if the former parent was not at the date of revocation, it was to have sole and unfeathered responsibility, the court had jurisdiction to make the order provided that the welfare of the child could be protected by making the revocation conditional upon such consequential orders as were appropriate under the Children Act or under its inherent jurisdiction or in some other way.

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There was no lacuna in the Adoption Act. It operated alongside and as part of the general legislation regulating powers over children. There was no reason why the provisions of the Act had to be read as a self-sufficient code. The powers it conferred in relation to

on their land, out of which five

acres were selected for trial. Mr Morris pleaded that he was a tenant from year to year, that he occupied the premises as his residence and that he was entitled to the protection of section 1 of the Rent Act 1977. The assistant recorder made that order, declaring that Mr Morris was a statutory tenant of Unit 6.

The parties accepted that if the bungalow was a chattel, the premises held by Mr Morris did not include the bungalow and comprised the site only and that his tenure was not a tenancy within section 1 of the 1977 Act. But the bungalow was a fixture Mr Morris held a protected tenancy under the Act.

Section 1 of the 1977 Act provides: "...a tenancy under which a dwelling-house... is let as a separate dwelling is a protected tenancy for the purposes of the Act..."

Mr Paul Morgan, QC and Mr Stephen Cottle for the defendants; Mr James Thom for the plaintiffs.

LORD LLOYD said that the plaintiffs were the freehold owners of Holt's Field, Murton, Swansea. The land was divided into 27 lots. Mr Morris was the occupier of a bungalow on lot No 6. It was built before 1945. Mr Morris had lived there since 1971.

The plaintiffs acquired to freehold in 1989 with a view to redevelopment. On April 30, 1991 they issued proceedings in Swansea County Court claiming possession against all 27 persons occupying plots

in that respect. In that respect, they all became part of the structure which was itself part and parcel of the land.

Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Nolan and Lord Nicholls agreed and Lord Clyde delivered a concurring opinion.

Solicitors: Smith Llewellyn Partnership, Swansea; T. G. Jones & Associated, Swansea.

Allocating prejudice

Hunter v Skingley and Another

Before Lord Justice Hirst and Lord Justice Phillips

[Judgment April 25]

In a case where there was substantial initial delay for which the defendant was entirely responsible, followed by delays for which the plaintiff was responsible, the judge allocated the time to the parties.

In that respect he was in a different position from the plaintiff in *Norwich Pharmacal* where it could be said with certainty that tortious infringements of its patent right were being committed by a third party.

The plaintiff had to discover whether a tort had been committed against him; whether, for instance, the statements made were untrue and made with malice.

The purpose of any court order

was to enable justice to be done. His Lordship held that the present case demanded that the plaintiff should be put in a position to clear him of his name.

It was intolerable that he should continue to be stained by the allegation unless he could obtain assistance through an order for discovery.

Accordingly, although *Norwich Pharmacal* had not yet been applied to a situation in which the plaintiff had not clearly been made out, his Lordship would grant the relief sought by the notice of motion.

Solicitors: Merriman White Hart Brown, Guildford.

The plaintiff's case for want of prosecution.

Mr Robert Bailey-King for the plaintiff; Mr Marc Rivalland for the defendant.

LORD JUSTICE HIRST said the action arose from building work carried out by the defendant for the plaintiff between February and April 1987.

The plaintiff had issued a writ claiming damages for breach of contract, and in May 1988 had obtained default judgment against the defendant.

The defendant had been entirely responsible for delays up to 1985 but thereafter "these had been delays for which the plaintiff was responsible."

His Lordship distinguished the

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delays for which the plaintiff was responsible."

His Lordship distinguished the

plaintiff's case from *Rosebuck v Mungovia* ([1994] 2 AC 224) in which Lord Browne-Wilkinson had regarded it as artificial and unsatisfactory to allocate to one rather than another period of time prejudice arising from erasure of witness memory.

In the circumstances it was not

appropriate to allocate prejudice and the judge had erred in not doing so.

Solicitors: Howard Stone, Hewitt & Hunter, Kirby Stephen.

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Solicitors: Howard Stone, Hewitt & Hunter, Kirby Stephen.

Correction

THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, Court of Appeal, London; *Times* April 29, 1997, section 10, page 1.

Mr Justice Hirst was not the

judge who delivered the

judgment.

Mr Justice Phillips was the

judge who delivered the

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An arsenal of new weapons is available to curb noisy neighbours, says Eve-Ann Prentice

The quiet revolution

What is music to the ears for some people can be torture for the neighbours. Be it *Aladdin's* acid house, the hi-fi sounds that thrill one person are invariably hellish second-hand from next door.

Local authorities are preparing to use an array of new powers to curb noisy and abusive neighbours, including surveillance, secret tape-recordings and the seizure of musical equipment. Councils were recently given muscle after the passing of two laws, the 1996 Housing Act, and the Noise Act, which became law in April.

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets, which administers one of the densest inner-city areas in the country, with 45,000 tenants and leaseholders, is to introduce a seven-night noise service from August. The council has also announced it is ready to take stronger measures against racial harassment and out-of-control children.

It is not just council tenants who can be neighbours from hell. Mary Rankin, Tower Hamlets environmental health officer, says: "You are just as likely to get noise from people who live in expensive private homes."

The council has agreed to adopt the Noise Act, giving itself the power to serve warning notices that any disturbance should be stopped within ten minutes; to issue fixed penalty notices, which can lead to a £100 fine for anyone who ignores the initial warning; and to prosecute those who commit a new nighttime noise offence. The fine can be up to £1,000.

A weapon in the war on noise is a sealed, tamper-proof black box containing a sound-level recorder, which is left in the homes of people who say they are victims of noisy neighbours. This is especially useful in cases where the noise is never apparent when council officials or the police arrive to investigate. Mr Rankin says: "The box, which costs £7,000 to £8,000, is usually left in the home for three or four days. There is a queue waiting to use it at the moment."

The problem with the box is that, though it records noise levels, it cannot detect the type or origins of the nuisance.

"The box could be recording a noisy life, for instance," Mr Rankin says. "There is no substitute for a witness... someone who has actually heard *Barry Manilow* being

played in the middle of the night." If all else fails, environmental health officers also have the power to seize amplifiers and other sound equipment. "We can get a permit from a magistrate to seize the equipment but this is a final course of action," Mr Rankin says. "When I was working for another council, we seized an entire bus that was being used for rave parties."

The new Tower Hamlets noise service will operate from 11pm until 7am, replacing a service that runs from Sundays to Thursdays, 9pm to 10.30am, and on Fridays and Saturdays 10.30pm to 10.30am.

John Biggs, the Planning and Environmental Services committee's chairman, says: "Tower Hamlets will be one of the first councils to adopt the Act. If people ignore us, they can expect action."

It is not just noise that can make residents' lives hell. Evert Rowbotham, a racial harassment lawyer working for Tower Hamlets, believes that racist abuse has become subtler and harder to detect in the past two years. He says: "Racial harassment cases used to come in thick and fast and the people we're dealing with were acting in full view; witnesses were easy to find. Now we have to use more surveillance to identify the perpetrators."

The council employs professional witnesses whose job is to gather evidence of harassment and give evidence in court. It owns its own surveillance equipment. "Some of the more expensive equipment that we have to hire, such as a camera," Mr Rowbotham adds, "fits into a button-hole."

Under the 1996 Housing Act, hearsay evidence can be used against tenants guilty of noisy, criminal or anti-social behaviour. The council is introducing a package of measures, including a new mediation service, closer co-operation with the police, including joint visits to culprits' homes, and steps to speed up legal action.

The Act also provides for an "introductory tenancy scheme", which gives councils a fast-track route to evict troublesome new tenants. Tower Hamlets has, however, decided not to implement this part of the Act for now, saying that some of the most serious anti-social behaviour comes from the children of tenants and their friends.



Marc Rankin, Tower Hamlets environmental health officer. "There is no substitute for a witness"

Address the issue fully

Property values can depend on the address, says Amanda Loose

After a court battle fraught with chains of snobbery, parish councillors, developers and residents in Beedey, near Dereham, Norfolk, thought they had finally cracked it.

The long-running battle over what to call the village's newest housing development — a cul-de-sac of ten houses — appeared to have been resolved a few weeks ago with the name "The Paddocks". But the Royal Mail pointed out that there was already a house called The Paddock, otherwise known as 4 Elmham Road, almost opposite the development. The solution: call the development "The Paddocks" but have no No 4.

The developer John Hilditch and Ray Knightley, who bought the first house on the development before a name was decided, wanted it to be called Elmham Court. But the parish council wanted to name



A property in Belgrave, an area that can attract offers running to several million pounds

it Bryan Barnard Close, after a veteran local councillor and former railwayman.

Elmham Court's association with the nearby desirable Elmham Road undoubtedly would have held a certain cachet, a factor that cannot be underestimated, as many an estate agent knows.

Rupert Bradstock of Proper-

ty Vision, a buying agency, says: "Every county is like the curate's egg when it comes to smart addresses: good in parts. But certain places are a cut above the rest."

Colin Mackenzie, of Hampsons, reckons the best country address is the Old Rectory, and that in the complicated county leagues East Sussex comes above West Kent, but below East Kent.

Even estate agents get caught out. Ian Homerisham of John D. Wood was at first miffed to learn that the SNI postcode of his new home in Coleshill, Oxfordshire, stood for Swindon.

John Gibson, of Savills in Chelmsford, has watched many clients wrestle with the complexities of the Suffolk-Essex Question, which one buyer solved by changing their address to "Suffolk (postal address Essex)". Mr Gibson says: "Some houses in Suffolk have a Colchester, Essex postal address, while some Essex houses have Suffolk addresses, and it can cause much consternation. One buyer would not move to East Bergfolt, which has an Essex address, even though it's in Suffolk, because he did not want his daughter to be an Essex girl."

Agents have many a tale of building Hyacinth Buckets prepared to pay well over the odds for the right address. Anthony Lassman sold an Saxon Square flat on a short

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THE TIMES

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HOW TO APPLY

Take the voucher which will be published in The Times tomorrow plus two tokens to Rock Circus, Piccadilly, London. When you purchase one full-paying adult ticket, you will be admitted with one child at no extra charge. (A child is 16 and under.) This offer is valid until May 31, 1997. For opening times, please call 0171-734 7203. Tickets are adult £19.95, child £6.50.

THE TIMES

ROCK CIRCUS

TOKEN 1

CHANGING TIMES

RACING: PANAMA-CITY MAKES CHESTER TRIAL STEPPING STONE TO ROME INSTEAD OF EPSOM

Derby challengers wilt in Vase

BY RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT:

FIRST the good news. The Chester Vase, yesterday lived up to its reputation for providing invaluable Derby clues when Panama City got the better of Ivan Luis in a thrilling finish.

Unfortunately, the Derby in question is not the Epsom classic, but the Derby Italiano to be run at the Capannelle, in Rome, on May 25, when the first two are likely to reappear for the third time in their careers. And therein lies the rub.

With the Derby only a month away, time is running out and genuine alternatives to Entrepreneur are as rare as the flurries of snow which fell on the Rodeo before racing. The 2,000 Guineas winner is now 5-4 on with Ladbrokes, although not everybody is convinced that it is a one-horse race.

There may not be anything

Ben Moore, the conditional rider, was discharged from hospital yesterday. Moore was concussed in a fall from Robert's Toy in a handicap hurdle at Exeter on Monday.

in the Derby at the moment apart from Entrepreneur but I am sure it will change. It normally does," Barry Hills said. "It will all happen in the next two or three weeks."

Robert Sangster, the owner of Panama City and, more importantly, Revoque, the Guineas runner-up, was even more upbeat. "The odds about Entrepreneur are ridiculous because he is not guaranteed to stay. The dam's pedigree is a springing pedigree."

That, as politicians would say, is negative campaigning.

"If anything is going to shake them up we will," he said on a more positive note. Revoque will probably take in the Irish 2,000 Guineas before being aimed at Epsom, although Sangster is the first to admit his classic pretender may have stamina limitations. "His breeding suggests he won't stay a mile and a half but his

time is negative campaigning.

"Revoque is a three-year-old

and he has won three races

so far and he is a good



Panama City, right, is driven out by Reid to justify favouritism in the Chester Vase from Ivan Luis, left, yesterday

Snow Princess to relish stamina test

CHESTER
CHANNEL 4

2.10: The handicapper may have been kind to Perfect Paradigm, who opened his account at Newcastle five weeks ago when beating the well-regarded Dark Green. The form was boosted when the third, Lawhuk, won a Ripon maiden by five lengths. John Gosden's Derby entry showed that he can handle soft ground at Chepstow last autumn.

Ivanity also holds a Derby entry, although John Dunlop has said the Chief's Crown colt is no better than a handicapper. Nonetheless, he ran well behind River's Son at Newmarket and, along with Filtring Around, should appreciate this trip.

Richard Hannon has trained three winners of the Queen Mary Stakes — Fly Baby (1981), Lyric Fantasy (1992) and Rikky (1993) — and believes she could be up to Royal Ascot standard. "She went so fast the saddle slipped backwards and I could hardly ride her. She's good," Pat Eddery said.

Richard Evans

TODAY'S RACES
ON TELEVISION

3.10: With Reg Akehurst's string in fine form, the soft ground-loving Bowcliffe Court looks sure to give a good account. Third last November to Sweetness Herself and Orchestra Stall (both have won good races this term), he ran well here last year and won at Warwick on his reappearance.

Canon Can is on the up-grade and should confirm Newbury form with Top Cees, but his victories have come on galloping tracks and he may not be so suited by this tight circuit. Snow Princess, a good third here over an inadequate trip last August before winning a listed race abroad, appears on this ground. She should appreciate this stamina test and won first time out last year.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: SNOW PRINCESS
(3.10 Chester)

Next best: Perfect Paradigm
(2.10 Chester)

Richard Evans

2.40: Only For Gold has an ideal draw, is bred to be speedy — his sire and dam were sprinters — and Jack Berry is sure to have him ready. Chunito showed early speed on his debut at Newbury but is badly drawn. Paul Cole, who runs Diligence, has an excellent strike rate with his juveniles.

Richard Evans

3.45: A race to avoid as some of these fillies are likely to step up on previous form. Kyle Rhea is the only filly not entered for the Oaks. Desert Beauty, whose dam was suited by the mud, gets the vote on the basis of a promising run behind One So Wonderful at Kempton last September. She is bred to do much better over this trip. Apache Star, a winner on soft ground last year, rates the danger.

Richard Evans

4.20: With Reg Akehurst's

string in fine form, the soft

ground-loving Bowcliffe

Court looks sure to give a

a good account. Third last

November to Sweetness

Herself and Orchestra

Stall (both have won good

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a good third here over an

inadequate trip last August

before winning a listed race

abroad. She should appreci-

ate this stamina test and won

first time out last year.

Richard Evans

4.45: With Reg Akehurst's

string in fine form, the soft

ground-loving Bowcliffe

Court looks sure to give a

a good account. Third last

November to Sweetness

Herself and Orchestra

Stall (both have won good

races this term), he ran well

here last year and won at Warwick on

his reappearance.

Canon Can is on the up-

grade and should confirm

Newbury form with Top Cees,

but his victories have come

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EQUESTRIANISM: NEW ZEALANDER BIDS TO Emerge FROM COMPATRIOT'S SHADOW AT BADMINTON

Tait savours chance to ride into history

Jenny MacArthur meets the Olympic champion still striving for recognition

If you were to take a straw poll on the name of New Zealand's Olympic three-day event champion, 90 per cent would probably say Mark Todd. They would be wrong. The answer is Blyth Tait (or "Blind Date", as one seven-year-old ventured).

Tait, 36, has been world champion (1990), Olympic bronze medal-winner (1992), the world's highest-ranked rider (1992, 1994 and 1996) and won the individual gold and team bronze in Atlanta last summer, but still lacks the recognition enjoyed by his compatriot. Badminton, which starts tomorrow, may unlock his fame.

"It was Todd's first win, in 1980, that propelled a little-known dairy farmer to the forefront of the sport, and Tait will not be satisfied until he has won it. He has come tantalisingly close. In four attempts he has been runner-up three times and was fifth last year on Chesterfield, the horse that he rides this week. "It's the one every rider wants to win," Tait said. "The pressure is enormous."

That should be to his advantage. Few riders have come under greater pressure than Tait did in Atlanta, when he found himself contesting the individual event on the eight-year-old Ready Teddy, a horse which had been a novice the previous year.

Originally selected as reserve, Tait took Ready Teddy to Atlanta rather than his more experienced horse, Aspyring, because he thought the younger horse would withstand the heat and travelling better. When Todd's horse, Kayem, went lame, he and Ready Teddy were called up.

"I remember thinking, 'My goodness, I'm here at the

Olympics on a green horse, but I've said he can do it so I must prove he can,'" Tait said. The ride that he produced has been hailed as one of the great feats of horsemanship. "I decided to start off as if I meant to win," Tait said, "and if he wasn't coping I'd pull him up — but he just kept flying."

Olympic success did at least bring recognition at home.

While his 1990 world champion

had been lost on a wider public, Tait's Olympic performance was televised at 3am, and most of the country seem to have watched it. Ten thousand people lined the streets of his home town at Pukekohe when he returned.

The gold medal also eased financial worries. Although sponsored by Toggi since 1992, Tait had to spend a lot of time teaching to make ends meet. Support from the New Zealand Sports Foundation, which regards Tait, Todd and Andrew Nicholson as three of the country's likely medal-winners for the Sydney Olympics in 2000, now allows Tait to concentrate on his riding and training.

Like his compatriots, he bases himself in England — at Susanne van Heyningen's yard near Northleach, in Gloucestershire — in order to benefit from its eventing facilities. "If you decide in New Zealand you want to event seriously, the only answer is to come to England," Tait said. "There aren't the facilities at home."

The chairman of the International Equestrian Riders Association, Tait recently criti-

cised the ruling that will

restrict foreign riders to one horse at the Mitsubishi Motors Badminton Horse Trials this year, while allowing certain British riders to have two.

"We understood the predicament," Tait said, "but it was disappointing for us that a system couldn't be worked out which was fair. It must be in Badminton's interests to have the best 80 horses in the world running."

Tait has had to drop his second ride, on Aspyring, and will pin his hopes on Chesterfield. The 11-year-old gelding, a tough New Zealand thoroughbred, was offered to him in 1994 after his rider, Melissa Bradley, had been killed in a car accident.

Tait said: "From what I hear, the course is very technical and it would be easy to have a silly run-out." Perfectionist that he is, he will walk the course at least three times and then, probably, confer with Todd. Although the riders are very different in physique (Todd is off sin, Tait sits 6in) and riding style — Todd sits quietly and appears to do little, Tait is busier — Tait values his advice.

"Mark put eventing on the map in New Zealand and he's been enormously influential in my approach to the sport," he said. "When I took back, I realise just how unselfish he's been with all the help he's given me." Perhaps, by Sunday evening, Tait's name will be as trumpeted as Todd's is. It could be Chesterfield's year after all.

RUGBY UNION

Leicester name optimum XV

LEICESTER, all being well, will reassemble their first-choice XV for the Pilkington Cup final against Sale at Twickenham on Saturday, an achievement that has been beyond them for most of the past month because of injuries. However, it does not include Dean Richards, the club captain, who must start among the replacements.

Eric Miller, the young Irishman, takes the No 8 position and Will Greenwood who, like Miller, has been suffering from an ankle injury, is expected to resume in the centre. Marin Johnson, the British

Isles captain, will lead the team, a role that he may fill permanently next season.

"We are on a roll at the moment, we haven't had a point scored against us in 50 minutes," Bob Dwyer, the Leicester director of rugby, said yesterday. The comment was well made: the defence has been like a leaky bucket during the past six games and they were distinctly fortunate not to concede more than two tries during the 20-20 league draw last Saturday at Sale, whose team for Twickenham will be named today.

That point, however, was

enough to put Leicester into the Heineken Cup next season and, in Dwyer's phrase, "shrug the monkey off our backs and free us to play with a little less hesitation".

Niall Malone, who played stand-off half last year, moves to full back at the expense of John Liley, and he is one of only two backs who survive from that day, along with Stuart Potter.

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GOLF: THE OXFORDSHIRE EPITOMISES A DISTURBING MOVE TOWARDS ARTIFICE

Bigger is not better in Britain

To The Oxfordshire, then, the venue for the International Open, which starts tomorrow. Oxfordshire is a county of honey-coloured houses, of tranquil pubs, the county of that university. In the *Wind in the Willows*, Kenneth Grahame wrote:

"The clever men at Oxford know all that there is to be known. But they none of them know one half as much as intelligent Mr Toad."

And yet I shall set off this morning with no more enthusiasm than a student attending an early tutorial with a particularly bifid professor. The Oxfordshire does not welcome me as Wentworth and Sunningdale do. Send me to Swinley Forest, to Ganton, to Woodhall Spa and my spirits will soar. But nothing similar happens, sadly, when duty requires my presence at The Oxfordshire.

The course and the clubhouse seem unsympathetic to

their surroundings. To come upon the club at the base of the Chilterns is as surprising as coming upon a pine tree in the desert.

The Oxfordshire has acres of water. It has that dun-coloured grass that one associates with the seaside. It has many artificial spectator mounds, cart paths, massive bunkers. Both its clubhouse and its golf course shriek at you, grab your attention with their muscularity. I am a minimalist not a maximalist and I feel that The Oxfordshire has as much subtlety as a Tiger Woods drive.

It is a big course, well over 7,000 yards, covering a huge acreage. I am unable to warm to it for the same reason I do not like big noisy people. It is overstated. It leaps up and down in front of me saying: "Here I am, aren't I big and strong?" Much the same applies to Chart Hills, to East Sussex National, and did, once upon a time, to The Belfry.

In the matter of designing and building golf courses in

JOHN HOPKINS



calls for courses that suit their surroundings

many parts of Britain, I am unconvinced that bigger is better. Why on such courses are there so many bunkers and why are so many so big? Why are inland courses built to include characteristics normally associated with seaside courses? Water is needed for

irrigation but does it need to be brought into play on seven of the 18 holes?

Water per se is not offensive. Look at the Swilcan Burn at St Andrews, the Suez Canal at Royal St George's and the Barry Burn at Carnoustie. "Water," wrote the late Peter Doberne, "creates neuroses in golfers. The very thought of this harmless fluid robs them of the normal powers of rational thought, turns their legs to jelly and produces a palsy of the upper limbs."

For this reason it is a legitimate weapon for a golf course architect in the continual struggle for supremacy over the golfer. Bobby Jones said that the difference between a bunker and a water hazard is the difference between a car crash and a plane crash — "you have some chance of recovering from a car crash".

In Florida, where the water table is only a few feet below the surface, to move earth is to reveal water. At The Oxfordshire and its ilk sit in Britain as sympathetically as Ganton would in southern California.

SNOOKER: IRISHMAN ENJOYS POPULAR ACCLAIM AFTER CHAMPIONSHIP DEFEAT OF HENDRY

Doherty proves good guys can win

BY PHIL YATES

MARY ROBINSON, the President of the Irish Republic, may not be a snooker aficionado, but she echoed the sentiments of the vast majority who are by describing Ken Doherty as "a fine ambassador" after his triumph at the Embassy world championship. She was referring specifically to the role Doherty will undertake for his country, but the easy-going, personable Dubliner, who defied antepost odds of 25-1 to lift the trophy, is sure to be of equal benefit for the game itself.

Doherty, 27, is a clean-living, dedicated but far from one-dimensional individual. He is a keen golfer with a passion, like so many of his countrymen, for Manchester United. He will, therefore,

RESULT

DETAILS: v Doherty 11-12, Hendry 11-12, Final. Embassy World 27-5-17. 9-11, 12-10, 13-11, 14-12, 15-13, 16-14, 17-15, 18-16, 19-17, 20-18, 21-19, 22-20, 23-21, 24-22, 25-23, 26-24, 27-25, 28-26, 29-27, 30-28, 31-29, 32-30, 33-31, 34-32, 35-33, 36-34, 37-35, 38-36, 39-37, 40-38, 41-39, 42-40, 43-41, 44-42, 45-43, 46-44, 47-45, 48-46, 49-47, 50-48, 51-49, 52-50, 53-51, 54-52, 55-53, 56-54, 57-55, 58-56, 59-57, 60-58, 61-59, 62-60, 63-61, 64-62, 65-63, 66-64, 67-65, 68-66, 69-67, 70-68, 71-69, 72-70, 73-71, 74-72, 75-73, 76-74, 77-75, 78-76, 79-77, 80-78, 81-79, 82-80, 83-81, 84-82, 85-83, 86-84, 87-85, 88-86, 89-87, 90-88, 91-89, 92-90, 93-91, 94-92, 95-93, 96-94, 97-95, 98-96, 99-97, 100-98, 101-99, 102-100, 103-101, 104-102, 105-103, 106-104, 107-105, 108-106, 109-107, 110-108, 111-109, 112-110, 113-111, 114-112, 115-113, 116-114, 117-115, 118-116, 119-117, 120-118, 121-119, 122-118, 123-121, 124-122, 125-123, 126-124, 127-125, 128-126, 129-127, 130-128, 131-129, 132-130, 133-131, 134-132, 135-133, 136-134, 137-135, 138-136, 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WEDNESDAY MAY 7 1997

CRICKET 45

Derbyshire on course for quarter-finals

Injury fears recede

Ravanelli targets Wembley return

BY DAVID MADDOCK

TWENTY-FOUR hours after being taken from the pitch at Old Trafford on a stretcher, his face contorted with the agony of injury and the apparent loss of his chance of playing in the FA Cup Final, Fabrizio Ravanelli bounded into the Riverside Stadium yesterday to announce that he may, after all, make an appearance at Wembley.

Even given his propensity for the dramatic, it is an astonishing turn-around, but after a scan at a Darlington hospital in the morning, the Middlesbrough centre forward learnt that what was feared to be a hamstring tear was, in fact, a far less serious injury.

Ravanelli said that he has no hope of playing in his side's two remaining FA Carling Premiership matches, which will decide the immediate fate of the club that has persistently hinted he would like to leave, but the Cup Final, against Chelsea on May 17, is a different matter.

"I feel quite good and that is a great relief after the pain and worry of Monday," the Italian said. "I've got no chance of playing in the remaining two league matches, but I am now hopeful of making the Cup Final."

"I would rate my chances at 50-50. It was a great worry for me, but I am walking quite well today and I really am feeling a lot better about my chances of playing at Wembley. At least there is hope for me, and I feel good about that."

Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough manager, was also optimistic as he confirmed that the injury was nowhere

near as extensive as was first thought. There was heavy swelling, he said, but the hamstring was not as badly damaged as the first bulletin suggested.

Fabrizio has a problem with the hamstring still, and so he remains a doubt," Robson said, "but the prospects are a lot brighter 24 hours on. The scan shows that there is no tear, which is what we feared when he was first injured. That is an improvement from Monday, and now there is real hope he will play."

Everton have ruled out the prospect of signing Jürgen Klinsmann as player-coach, but say there is still interest in securing his services as a player only.

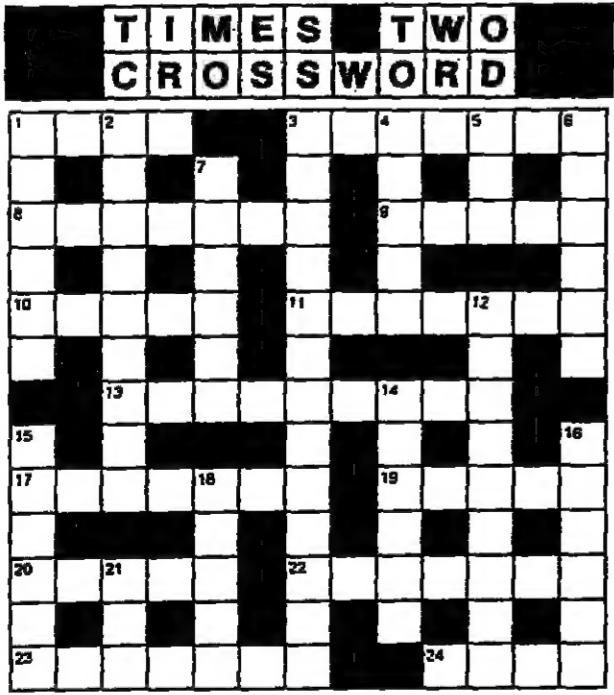
A senior club official said that there had never been any intention of offering the manager's job to the Germany striker, merely confusion when Everton approached him to inquire whether he would be interested in joining the playing staff.

Klinsmann is also considering approaches from AC Milan, Torino and Real Madrid, who are all, apparently, ready to meet his demand for £50,000 per week in wages. Everton, understandably, are not confident of winning that particular battle.

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No 1087

ACROSS

- Teasing (leaf) raise (back) (4)
- Frenzied (7)
- Flowers pinned to dress (7)
- Inarticulate sound, as of pig (5)
- Face-protector, sun-shield (5)
- Maintaining links out of play (2,5)
- Crawfish, spiny lobster (9)
- Slake (7)
- Loathe (5)
- Wild animal; harmless paper version (5)
- Property, sounds for play (7)
- Give authority to (7)
- Tactic (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1086

ACROSS: 1 Rubric, 5 Fetish, 8 Adam, 9 Aquarius, 10 Penalty, 11 Nippy, 13 Short shrift, 16 Nappy, 18 Frigate, 21 Ultimatum, 22 Gilt, 23 Grok, 24 Salary

DOWN: 2 Undress, 3 Rumha, 4 Chastity, 5 Foul, 6 Termini, 7 Stump, 12 Chariots, 14 Orpheus, 15 Titular, 17 All in, 19 Gog, 20 Kiss

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 1082

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- Eager, 15 Tarry, 16 Pedal, 18 Expedient, 21 Malvolio, 22 Knee, 23 Tagged, 24 Hubris
- Depot, 4 Chaser, 8 Pile, 9 Inaction, 10 Courtesan, 11 Title role, 12 Syrup, 14 Governor, 16 Helmet, 17 Stress, 19 Enoch, 20 Flag

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Report proposes overhaul of the Football League

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

STAND by, the revolution is about to begin. An independent report that was published yesterday proposes radical changes to take the Football League, perhaps kicking and screaming, into the next millennium. It warned that if its recommendations were rejected, many of the league's 72 clubs would disappear.

The 142-page consultation document, which cost about £100,000 and took four months to produce, was presented in London by Deloitte & Touche, the management consultancy firm. Its proposals will be discussed at a specially convened meeting of league chairmen tomorrow but will not be voted on until the annual meeting next month. Even then, implementation is unlikely until the start of the 1998-99 season.

The former England coach began talks with Josep Luis Núñez, the Barcelona president, last night, in an attempt to clarify his position. Robson is expected to have a clearer picture today of his prospects.

a future, rather than defend the past, you have to consider this report."

Boon criticised the league's administrative structure with its headquarters in Lytham St Annes, Lancashire, and labyrinth of committees. "The league is a big business and needs to act like one," he said. "It has a service to provide to clubs and should not undermine them. It must be marketed and not administration driven."

"Communication is poor with clubs and within the clubs. Revenue generation has to be the primary concern of the league, it needs a proper business plan. The old management style has to go."

The key point of the report, and its most controversial, is the amalgamation of the 24-club third division with the 22-strong Vauxhall Conference, which would then be split into two sections, north and south. Promotion to the second division could be increased to four or five clubs, including those from the play-offs, and one club from each section would be demoted into a reformed Conference.

"We feel very positive about this," John Noules, the secre-

tary of the Conference, said yesterday. "It's something we've been working towards for ten years. We're delighted that we now have a competition worthy of being included in the league structure."

Other proposals include the reorganisation of the Coca-Cola Cup, with sides from the FA Carling Premiership and first division not entering the competition until the third round. An additional early round, played over two legs, would be needed to accommodate the increased league membership. Later ties would be decided on the night, with out replays.

The report also urges that

THIRD DIVISION

HOW IT COULD LOOK: North: Gainsborough Trinity, Hednesford Town, Horncastle, Lincoln City, Louth, Mablethorpe, Market Rasen, Sleaford, Spalding, Tadcaster, Tadcaster Rangers, Tadcaster United, Doncaster Rovers, South: Cheltenham Town, Dover Athleti, Bury, Fleetwood Town, Farnborough Town, Hayes, Hayes & Yeading United, Kettering Town, Rushden & Diamonds, Cardiff City, Chesterfield, Stourbridge, Tamworth, Tipton Town, Walsall, Welling United, Woking, Leyton Orient, Torquay United, Yeovil Town, Notts County, Peterborough United

the league should move its base to London and appoint an independent chairman, a chief executive and commercial director. "At the moment, before television money and transfer activity is taken into account, league clubs run a combined annual deficit of £45.6 million," Boon said.

"Income is reducing but costs are rising all the time with league wages having increased by 64 per cent over the past four seasons. There are 20 clubs who, if the Inland Revenue wanted to, could be closed down. The vast majority are trading at a loss."

Though many of the recommendations are likely to receive a lukewarm response from the traditionalists, David Sheepshanks, the league chairman, who commissioned the report, is adamant that it represents the only way forward.

"The fact remains that 58 of the 72 clubs are showing net operating losses, before transfers, for last year," he said. "Operating costs have outstripped income. I hope we can aspire to a new dynamic age, in which we can create a climate for individual clubs to prosper."

Gascoigne runs out of time for England

BY KEVIN McCARRA

ANY faint prospect of Paul Gascoigne returning to the England squad for the World Cup qualifying match in Poland on May 31 seems to have disappeared. Although he is now back in action, following an injury to his ankle suffered in January, the midfield player has only been used as a substitute by Rangers in their past two matches.

Walter Smith, the Rangers manager, said Gascoigne was suffering from a thigh strain that prevented him from laying a full game. With Rangers' final game of the season

against Heart of Midlothian taking place on Saturday, he now has no means of demonstrating his fitness to Glenn Hoddle, the England manager, before May 31.

Rangers travel to Dundee United this evening still looking for the point that will officially confirm them as champions for the ninth season in succession.

Given their six-point lead over Celtic and a goal difference that is superior by ten, Rangers are in little danger, but they will be eager to complete the formalities.

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Schalke seek revival in fortunes

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

GELSENKIRCHEN has had little to cheer about in recent years. It is a door city, deep in the heart of Germany's industrial Ruhr, where rising unemployment has deepened the contrast between its blue-collar gloom and the brighter lights of Munich, Hamburg, Berlin and the rest. Even its football team has failed to light the atmosphere.

Until tonight, that is, for Gelsenkirchen will raise the roof at the Parkstadion when Schalke 04 run out for the first leg of the UEFA Cup final against Internazionale. That Inter represent affluent, fashionable Milan will increase the volume even more.

Indeed, the team fill their allotted roles almost perfectly. Inter are cosmopolitan, expensively assembled and even if Youri Djorkaeff, Jocelyn Angloma and, to his immense frustration, Paul Ince are suspended for the first leg, they can still call on Ivan Zamorano, of Chile, Aron Winter, of Holland, Javier Zanetti, of Argentina, Ciriaco Sforza, of Switzerland, and a posse of Italy internationals.

Schalke boast no such stars. Olaf Thon used to play for Germany, but no longer does, and while Johan de Kock is an occasional Holland international and Marc Wilton plays for Belgium, neither they nor the Czechs, Jiri Nemec or Radoslav Lalak, are exactly household names.

For Roy Hodgson, the Inter coach, shortly to be Blackburn Rovers' manager, overconfidence may be his team's

greatest enemy. "Schalke are one of the best-supported clubs in the Bundesliga and it will be a tough game," he said. "Only a fool underestimates his opponent." Clearly, he is paying no attention to Schalke's recent run of eight league games without a win.

Patrick Blondel could be forgiven for thinking "there, but for the grace of God . . ." when Inter attempt to reclaim the trophy they won in 1991

and 1994, for the French defender was in the AS Monaco side beaten by the Italians in the semi-finals. Instead, he is completing his move to Sheffield Wednesday, which, after a medical today, should see his services secured for a fee of £1.8 million.

Fred Davies, at 57, the league's oldest manager, is out of a job after being dismissed yesterday by Shrewsbury Town, who have been relegated to the third division of the Nationwide League. In contrast, Gordon Strachan has been told by Bryan Richardson, the Coventry City chairman, that he will not be sacked, even if Coventry are relegated from the FA Carling Premiership next weekend. Mick Jones has been given a two-year contract by Plymouth Argyle, where he had been caretaker-manager since the departure of Neil Warnock in January.

Robbie Fowler, of Liverpool, has been charged with misconduct by the Football Association after clashing with David Unsworth, the Everton defender, after the pair had been sent off in the Merseyside derby.

Ince must sit on sidelines for Internazionale tonight

